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REGIONAL AFFAIRS

Statement by Arab Lawyers Union on U.S.-British Allegations

LD2501122292 Tripoli JANA in English 1427 GMT
24 Jan 92

[Text] Cairo, Ay al-Nar [January] 24, JANA—Arab Maghreb Union. The secretary general of the Arab Lawyers Union Faruq Abu Issa stated that international legitimacy requires a commitment to settle all international disputes through peaceful means.

He indicated that a state should not single itself out to dominate the world and itself a policeman and impose its will and desire over other states thus violating international legitimacy and threatening international peace and security.

In a statement made to a Jamahiriya news agency correspondent in Cairo he said that the Arab Lawyers Union confirms its support and solidarity with the people of the Great jamahiriya against the false US-British allegations.

He pointed out that the recent emergency session of the Arab Lawyers Union under the slogan 'solidarity with the Libyan people' confirms this attitude.

He added that senior Arab experts in international law and political science studied the legal dimensions of this case and were unanimous about the correctness and wisdom of Libya's stance which is based on international legitimacy and that the American, British and French stances contradict international law and legitimacy.

Farouq Abu Issa the secretary general of the Arab Lawyers Union, announced that all trade unions and Arab lawyers will go on a one day general strike on February 5th (al-Nawwar) in solidarity with the Arab Libyan people as everything that affects the Great Jamahiriya affects the whole Arab nation.

He also stated that this imperialist move is a link in the chain of conspiracies against the Arab nation.

Gulf Institutions' Role in Decisionmaking Explained

92AE0150A Al-Sharīqah AL-KHALIJ in Arabic
11 Dec 91 p 6

[Preliminary paper presented by Dr. Muhammad 'Abdallah al-Mutawwa' at a seminar on "Unification Between Arab Gulf Countries—A View of the Future," held in Kuwait 7-9 December on initiative of Kuwait University faculty]

[Text] The 2nd of August 1990 represents the start of a new phase in contemporary Arab history. That shock [Iraq's invasion of Kuwait] created new features in Arab-Arab relations and Arab-international relations. It was also a turning point in the history of Arab populism.

It laid bare the shortcoming in Arab political life and helped to establish political, social, and economic values that stress the importance of peoples and their organizations in the political structure in the Arab Gulf and other Arab countries.

The past 40 years have seen many attempts to establish a state of institutions in the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] countries based on the guidance of the sociopolitical elite in the framework of public or other political activity. The goal has been to make society more stable and more cognizant of citizens' rights and duties. Perhaps the reform movements of the 1930s in some countries in the region helped create educated, aware generations that gained experience in fulfilling their role in society.

Since emerging in the fifties and sixties, leagues, clubs, and student unions (which are tantamount to fronts for populist action among students attempting to find a foothold in their interaction with their social environment), have attempted to communicate their orientations and ideas to decision-makers in the region's countries.

The decisions and recommendations made at these organizations' conventions provide an indication of their members' general orientations over the past 40 years on numerous political, social, and economic issues. These general orientations represent that generation's view of how to define the relationship between the three frameworks [i.e., leagues, clubs, and student unions]. They also represent its emphasis on the importance of populist participation in managing society on all levels.

Since obtaining political independence after the British protectorate period, countries in the region have tried to establish the outlines and political shape of a modern state. Some of them established constitutions (Kuwait, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates). They have also tried, as much as possible, to build a modern state by establishing an infrastructure for education, health, urban planning, etc. Within this foundation, it became necessary to create trade associations and associations for women, the arts, etc. Such associations are clearly active in three GCC countries of Kuwait, Bahrain, and the UAE [United Arab Emirates]. These associations can also be considered a form of trade unions, which play a basic role in deepening national, patriotic, and humanitarian awareness through their activities, relative independence, and freedom to elect the members of their boards of directors.

During the seventies and eighties, these associations proved their patriotic loyalty and political and social maturity on more than one occasion. They also became a cultural mode in which society took pride, because, to a certain extent, they provided the only free atmosphere in society.

During the past 30 years, Gulf societies have experienced rapid developments in various fields, especially politics (the Kuwaiti National Assembly; the Bahraini National

Assembly; the Federal National Council in the UAE; the Consultative Council in Qatar, and recently in Oman). The growth of the number of universities, and consequently the study of other peoples' experiences in participating and decision-making, has certainly made an imprint on the Gulf mentality. The various media and summer travel abroad by the Gulf population have also opened up new horizons and ideas that have hastened the development of public opinion's focus on the importance of the role of national institutions in decision-making or, in other words, the people's role through its institutions in the formulation of decisions in general.

The New International Situation

Democracy and human rights have preoccupied the world for a long time. All societies are demanding them more and more. There is a growing conviction in the importance of democracy as a means to regulate society politically, economically, and socially, and to guarantee the protection of human rights. This trend has reinforced the importance of democracy in the Third World, of which the Arab world is a part. Nonetheless, despite this trend, and the compounding of political, economic, and social circumstances, military or dynastic party elites have jumped into power and absolute hegemony without taking into account any charters or constitutions. Such elite have continually violated individual rights, even fighting individuals over their daily bread. They disregard the individual's minimum rights under the banner of numerous slogans and through various means and arguments. In some cases, they have abused political power to instill fear, terrorize, and to suppress anyone attempting to define the relationship between the ruler and the ruled.

The world has witnessed fundamental changes and developments since the mid-eighties. Democracy has spread. Human rights are increasingly defended throughout the world. The peoples of Eastern and Western Europe have demonstrated the importance of democracy and the need to focus on human rights. The Arab world has seen the emergence of a movement which has demanded democracy unequivocally, after numerous defeats, whose price was paid by the Arab citizen, because he was excluded from participating in decision-making regarding crucial issues of concern to him. It is useful, in this respect, to review the political and social literature from the seventies to the nineties. In this literature, one notes a focus in the Arab world on the importance of democracy, which is promoted by all social and political forces. Democracy has become a universal preoccupation, whether in discussions of its organizational outlines or in discussions of the available or envisioned means of applying it to enable the individual to exercise his rights and fulfill his duties. This trend entrenches the concept of citizenship and reinforces the state of institutions, which is the true safeguard for the two sides of the political equation in modern Arab society, i.e., the ruler and ruled.

The world is moving toward establishing a role for populist organizations and bodies that cooperate with government in managing society and decision-making in all fields affecting the present and future of civilian society.

Composition of Population and Public Welfare Associations

One might ask about the number of these populist organizations (of which public welfare associations are an example) in the GCC countries and the number of members in them. In doing so, one should take into account that the GCC countries have small populations in general, and even a smaller number of citizens entitled to participate in decision-making and who are active in public welfare associations. Here, we should refer to statistics, although most of them are estimates, given that researchers studying the affairs of this region have a problem in obtaining statistics. Table 1 indicates the population in the GCC countries.

Table 1: Population of GCC Countries in Millions

Country	1990	2000
UAE	1.844	1.979
Bahrain	0.497	0.626
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	14.870	20.111
Sultanate of Oman	2.000	2.125
Qatar	0.389	0.523
Kuwait	2.063	2.782
Total	21.663	28.146

Remembering that citizens account for only 50 percent of the total population in the GCC countries, the total number of citizens in the GCC countries was about 11 million in 1990, and is expected to increase to about 14 million in 2000. If we remember that women and the elderly are less active in public affairs, the picture becomes clearer. Thus, the actual number of people active is an energetic, aware minority that recognizes the importance of the role of populist organizations in decision-making. We could even speak of an elite with a vision of the future. Perhaps the participation of women in this process has become necessary, given that they comprise almost 50 percent of all citizens. Therefore, it would be useful to advocate women occupying positions at all levels of society.

What is the desired role for women in light of these data? This question also requires frank, bold discussion. We must provide answers without delay. We must not evade facing the present and preparing for the future.

Table 2 lists the number of public welfare associations in the GCC countries, which are among the most important populist institutions.

Table 2: Public Welfare Associations in GCC

	Number of Associations	Number of Members
UAE	81	5,766
Bahrain	29	5,420
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	87	25,157
Sultanate of Oman	15	1,500
Qatar	1	500
Kuwait	53	18,813
Total	238	57,156

Source: Dr. Baqir al-Najjar: "Social and Volunteer Activity in Arab Gulf Countries."

In discussing the number of public welfare associations and their members, we are enjoined by the new data on worldwide changes in democracy and human rights to re-examine the way in which decisions are made in our societies. In this way, we can keep pace with what is happening in the world and avoid lagging behind, because lagging behind would undermine domestic cohesion, which is the safety valve for maintaining the stability and security sought by nations under the new world order.

The large number of public welfare associations in the GCC countries does not mean that all of them are active or effectively pursuing social and political issues that overtake society or that require discussion and monitoring by these or other associations. Rather, a substantial number of these associations are dormant, having even forgotten why they were founded or society's need for them!

This second crisis in the Gulf poses a number of problems in the Gulf arena that must be remedied without delay, lest Gulf societies become exposed to other shocks.

The importance of the internal front in society became clear during the crisis. We find that Kuwaiti society, because of its political experience, strove, to a large extent, to discard all sectarian and tribal propositions. Everyone merged to confront the danger posed by the invasion.

Large groups of individuals in society proved that loyalty to the homeland is not determined solely by Kuwaiti citizenship. Instead, everyone's prime concern was national unity and a cohesive society governed by cooperation and a common destiny.

Therefore, any re-examination of the social conditions in the region's countries requires deeper understanding on the part of the concerned governments and peoples.

It has become necessary to re-examine the non-citizen group (which numbers almost 250,000 in Kuwait) with a view toward taking practical measures to define their identity. Citizenship laws throughout the Gulf should

also be examined. This will ensure a more secure, more stable future. The participation of public welfare associations, such as the Lawyers' Association, is needed to solve this problem.

The question of grassroots participation and democracy in Arab Gulf societies stimulated an extensive debate before, during, and after the crisis. We will bear the lesson that we learned from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait for many years. That invasion was the glaring embodiment of dictatorial rule. It cost the nation much on all levels; we all are aware of the fantastic figures pertaining to war losses, let alone the social gap that developed between the Arab peoples. Despite all of the problems created by the war, there is nonetheless a ray of hope. If we cling to it, we will reach the safe harbor of [political] participation and democracy. Did not popular sympathy with the state of Kuwait in the West stem from the fact that Kuwait is among the few Arab countries governed by a constitution, and that Kuwait has a unique parliamentary experience?

Gulf women must play an active role in society. Citizens must be treated based on their full rights and duties. In this regard, women's federations and associations, which are populist institutions, should play a role. They should not remain mere structures for engaging in handicrafts and cooking classes, or showcases for the display of the pseudo-role of women in Gulf societies.

Will we benefit from the shock whose price was paid by the people of the Arab world and the martyrs of Kuwait, in particular? Do decision-makers in the GCC countries realize the importance of making a transition to a state of institutions, strengthening the role of populist organizations, and discarding all of the tribal and sectarian propositions rejected by all civilized nations? Needless to say, the age of autocratic power and autocratic decision-making is no longer suited to survival, as taught by what is happening around us.

Finally, will we keep pace with development and catch up with the advanced countries? Or do we need another shock?

Hassan II Chairs Arab Foreign Ministers' Talks

LD2401161692 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 24 Jan 92

[Text] Today His Majesty King Hassan II chaired a closed meeting with Arab foreign ministers, held at the Royal Palace in Marrakech in the presence of Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid.

[Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network Arabic 241430 notes: "The ministers discussed the Arab stance vis-a-vis a number of issues, including the Middle East peace process and the UN Security Council summit meeting scheduled for next Friday."]

Iranian Leadership on Future Role of Hizballah

*TA0302151092 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ
in Hebrew 3 Feb 92 p 8*

[Text] The Iranian leadership recently opened a series of discussions on the future definition of the role of Hizballah in Lebanon.

The discussions began after the visit of Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam to Tehran in mid-January, when he conveyed the aspiration of Damascus to President Hashemi-Rafsanjani to transform Hizballah into a primarily political organization, instead of a paramilitary one, as it is today.

The Syrians asked those Iranians responsible for the organization to disarm Hizballah of its weapons, and to allow it to be integrated into the current Lebanese reconciliation policy. "The time has come for the Shiite population in Lebanon to be integrated into its own power bloc in Lebanon."

At the same time, the Syrians, as they explained to the Iranians, are interested in Hizballah maintaining a military presence in southern Lebanon, against the lines of the SLA [South Lebanese Army] and the IDF [Israel Defense Forces].

The Iranian leadership is divided in two over the issue of Hizballah. The leading stream, headed by President Rafsanjani, supports the disarmament of Hizballah and the integration of the organization as a Lebanese political party, and it would participate in the process it has thus far boycotted. The spiritual leader of Hizballah, Shaykh Husayn Fadlallah, recently hinted that he also sees a place for cooperation with the rest of the parties, including the Christians, "although the joint struggle against Israel must be continued."

The radicals in the Iranian parliament, former Interior Minister 'Ali Akbar Mohtashemi-Pur and the son of Imam Khomeyni, want to continue sending funds and weapons to Lebanon and to Hizballah, and to continue teaching the Iranian language and tradition there, within the framework of the "export of revolution."

Editors Urge Popular 'No' to 'Aggression' Against Libya

*NC0402102892 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 28 Jan 92
pp 1, 9*

[Article by Jamal Badawi, Philip Jallab, Mustafa Bakri, and 'Adil Husayn, the chief editors respectively of Egyptian opposition newspapers AL-WAFD, AL-AHALI, MISR AL-FATAH, and AL-SHA'B, following a meeting at the AL-SHA'B newspaper office on 23 January: "No to Terrorism, No to Aggression Against Libya"]

[Text] The Security Council has issued an unjust resolution compelling the Libyan Jamahiriyyah to hand over two

of its citizens to foreign investigating authorities for interrogation on accusations that they downed the U.S. Pan-Am airliner over the Scottish town of Lockerbie in 1988.

There is no doubt that this resolution, which is contrary to international law and which encroaches upon a UN member state's sovereignty, was passed with a view to preparing the regional and international atmosphere for other resolutions to be used as a cover for carrying out aggressive acts against the fraternal Arab Libyan people. The resolution, the result of flagrant instigation by the United States, Britain, and France, treats blowing up the U.S. airliner as a political case, while it is one that must be subject to legal treatment only. This confirms that the intention is to use the incident as a pretext for striking at the Libyan Jamahiriyyah, which adopted some political positions on the conflict in the region, on the Madrid conference issue in particular, contrary to U.S. and some Western countries' stands. You may disagree with some of the Libyan Jamahiriyyah's stands and policies, but nobody could agree with or support the Security Council's hostile attitude, instigated by these three countries.

Libya has shown the necessary flexibility, handling the crisis with reason and objectivity, for which many Arab and world circles have praised it. Libya has also said that it is ready to receive an international investigating committee to discuss the crisis' issues. It is strange that the parties have turned a deaf ear to these initiatives, seeking an arbitrary Security Council resolution which compels Libya to abandon its sovereignty and dignity, and which disregards international law.

The United States and its allies are using double standards to deal with the Security Council resolution. While disregarding resolutions which condemn Israel's occupation of the occupied Arab territories and which demand a halt to its arbitrary and terrorist practices against the Arabs and Palestinians, they rush to implement those which serve their own and regional allies' interests, showing indifference to the Arab peoples' interests and causes.

So far, the United States has no strong evidence incriminating Libya, proving that it is responsible for blowing up the U.S. plane. This proves a clear and obvious injustice. It also shows that the new world order which the United States is trying to establish only seeks to impose U.S. and Western hegemony on the Arab homeland and Third World countries, with a view to terrorizing them and pushing them to join. It does not care about legitimacy and is not based on law.

The danger of the aggression against Libya is that it targets the heart of Arab and Egyptian security, since Libya is a neighbor with which we no longer have any border restrictions. It is also home to more than 1 million Egyptians and provides Egypt with an indispensable strategic dimension.

Egyptian and Arab public opinion, which rejects all types and sources of terrorism, will not remain silent over such aggression. Nor will it let a fraternal Arab people starve

under an economic blockade. We warn and warn [as published] of the danger of the conspiracies being hatched against the Arab nation. We urge the Egyptian Government to live up to its pan-Arab responsibility to the Joint Defense Pact with Libya. We also urge all honest forces to say a loud "no" to the aggression against the Jamahiriyah.

Paper Cautions Against Stepping Up Pressure on Libya

NC0102170292 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0609 GMT
2 Feb 92

[Text] Cairo, 1 Feb (MENA)—AL-AHRAM writes that the United States, Britain, and France, stepping up moves through the Security Council to force Libya to hand over two of its nationals for trial on charges of international terrorism for masterminding the downing of two civilian planes, will cause new friction in dealing with the Arab world.

In a comment published on Saturday, the paper says the Arab states believe that imposing economic or other sanctions on Libya two weeks after the Security Council resolution is going too far, to the point of seeking humiliation and disgrace. This, while Libya has shown that it is ready to cooperate with the international community and has proposed some formulas for doing so, such as demanding the right to follow up the case and take part in investigations, which shows its goodwill and understanding. The paper affirms that it was not right for three such important states to stoop to "pushing the knife into the chest" by seeking to impose crippling sanctions.

AL-AHRAM believes that it might be better to be satisfied with the UN resolution and then to keep on demanding the suspects' handover through legal and diplomatic channels. If the two suspects are government employees, as those who are pressing the charges claim, then going so far as to punish an entire people by imposing economic sanctions, not to mention military action, in revenge for a government crime, defies logic and legislation.

The paper states that the real tragedy in the Arabs' eyes is the double standard used in dealing with them and Israel, which international resolutions condemn in practice for committing horrible acts bordering on terrorism in the occupied territories, but which is left untouched. Some even sympathize with its government's request for billions in loans.

Ba'th Party Official Returns From Libya

JN3101054692 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio
Network in Arabic 2115 GMT 30 Jan 92

[Excerpt] Damascus—Comrade Dr. Tawfiq Salihah, member of the Regional Command of Arab Socialist Ba'th party, and his delegation returned to Damascus

this evening having participated in the emergency pan-Arab meeting of Arab political parties and forces. The meeting was held in Tripoli to express solidarity with the brotherly Libyan Arab people and to support them against the imperialist dangers and threats posed to them and to the Arab nation. [passage omitted]

Col al-Kharrubi Delivers Message to Shaykh Zayid

JN1201185192 Manama WAKH in Arabic 1735 GMT
12 Jan 92

[Text] Abu Dhabi, 12 Jan (WAKH)—Colonel Mustafa al-Kharrubi, inspector general of the Libyan Armed Forces, arrived in Abu Dhabi from Muscat this evening, as part of his tour to a number of states in the region.

He told the EMIRATES NEWS AGENCY upon arrival that he carries a message to His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the United Arab Emirates, from Libyan leader Colonel Mu'ammarr al-Qadhafi, dealing with bilateral ties and issues of mutual concern.

AL-AHRAM Says Resolution on Libya Seeks To Set 'Precedent'

NC2901091592 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2210 GMT
28 Jan 92

[Text] Cairo, 28 Jan (MENA)—Cairo newspaper AL-AHRAM comments in its Wednesday editorial on the West's stand on Libya. It notes that following the Security Council's resolution demanding Libya hand over two people charged with downing the U.S. and French airliners in 1988 and 1989, some contradictory statements were made by the West, which probably pursues their extradition as a vote winner. The statements indicate that there is no intention of escalating moves against Libya by imposing harsh economic sanctions. There have been statements affirming the possibility of military retaliation.

AL-AHRAM adds that this is the first Security Council resolution to ask one UN-member state to hand over its nationals in response to other members' request. Three of the five permanent member states want Libya to hand over two nationals. This calls for giving deliberation every opportunity, because the resolution's significance is clear. Its aim is to set a precedent, authorizing one or more of the permanent member states to pursue other countries' nationals through the biggest international authority, the basic duty of which is to establish peace and prevent war. This means that the council will overstep its powers to the point of cornering citizens in their homes to hand them over to other countries. This is a legal task concerning a specific agency in each country and is one which is governed by internationally-known procedures, rules, and protocols.

The newspaper adds: Politicizing individual cases, placing them in an international arena, and attributing

them to what is called international terrorism, pressuring governments to impose their will and punishing people by retaliation, be it economic or military, goes beyond retribution, to tyranny.

Concluding its editorial, the paper notes a clear line between legal and political cases, particularly when individuals, not governments, are being accused. The request to hand over individuals must go through the legal channels, access to which is clear among the states. To involve the Security Council, the biggest international authority with binding powers, with a view to letting one or more countries, in the name of the world community, serve their own interests by dominating the council, demeans the integrity of the council and the countries.

Libya Reportedly Engages in 'Terrorism' While Improving Image

*TA2201180092 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew
1500 GMT 22 Jan 92*

[Report by army affairs correspondent 'Ido Baum]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Sources in Israel have said that following the Pan Am affair, where a passenger plane was blown up over Lockerbie, Libya now takes steps to moderate its involvement in international terror activity. The sources said that Libya is now trying to show a more credible and sane public image. That is why Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi ordered that Libyan terrorist activity be reduced, or at least that it appear externally to be doing so.

Israeli sources stressed that despite its acting the naive on the outside, Libya is still engaged in extensive terrorist activity at home. In Libya, al-Qadhafi keeps providing a host of terror organizations with residential and training facilities. He gives financial support and training facilities to the rejectionist front organizations on the one hand and assists Fatah on the other. [passage omitted]

Unions Issue Statement Supporting Libya, Warning of Threats

*JN3001185592 Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic
24 Jan 92 p 3*

[Excerpt] Damascus (SANA)—Popular organizations and trade unions in the Syrian Arab Republic have issued the following statement:

O masses of our people, political and media campaigns by the United States and some of its allies have been escalating for months against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyyah, harboring imminent measures against this fraternal country on the pretext of accusing two Libyan citizens of bombing two American and French planes.

Libya has replied to these accusations by calling for the formation of an international investigation committee to reveal the facts to the world. It has also expressed its readiness to cooperate with any international body if

their objective is to ascertain the truth. However, all the Libyan proposals to cooperate and to ascertain the truth have been rejected. This proves that the objective of this campaign is to undermine the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyyah and to take measures against it. The UN Security Council resolution was one of the serious links in this campaign, especially since forcing the UN Security Council to adopt a resolution, which conflicts with the UN Charter, constitutes a serious precedence in international relations and in the march of the United Nations.

The popular organizations and trade unions in Syria view this campaign as a threat to Libya and all Arabs. Therefore, they voice their strong support for fraternal Libya against any adventure or measure targeting an Arab country, and call on all Arabs to be alert to the threats posed by this situation. All Arab masses throughout the Arab homeland are called upon to be extra cautious and alert to anything threatening the Arabs' present and future.

[passage omitted on organizations and trade unions signing the statement]

Libyan External Liaison Official Makes Statement on Talks

*LD1401121992 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in Arabic
2030 GMT 13 Jan 92*

[Excerpt] Mr. Ibrahim Muhammad al-Bishari, External Liaison and International Cooperation secretary of the Arab Libyan Jamahiriyyah, left Nouakchott for Libya today at noon following a two-day visit to Mauritania.

Prior to his departure, al-Bishari told the Mauritanian press agency that he held consultations with Foreign Minister Hasni Ould Didi, in the latter's capacity as current chairman of the Arab Maghreb Union Ministerial Council. The talks primarily concerned the rapid development in the world, particularly in the Arab Maghreb. Al-Bishari added that it is natural to hold consultations to exchange viewpoints on such developments, pointing out that the Libyan Jamahiriyyah is facing foreign challenges; therefore, our brothers in Mauritania should be aware of their brothers' views in the Jamahiriyyah. [passage omitted]

Railroad Link With Libya To Be Established

*NC0402055492 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1352 GMT
3 Feb 92*

[Excerpt] Cairo, 3 Feb (MENA)—Engineer Sulayman Mutawalli, minister of transport, communications, and maritime transport, has stated that studies on building a railroad linking Egypt with Libya from al-Sallum to Tobruk have been completed. He said that agreement was reached with the Libyan minister of transport and communications during the latter's visit to Cairo that Libya will finance this line at a cost of \$500 million.

He said that a consortium of Egyptian and Libyan companies will be formed in three months to build the line. [passage omitted]

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Article Discusses Obstacles to Autonomy

92AE0155B Jerusalem AL-BAYADIR AL-SIYASI
in Arabic 7 Dec 91 p 20

[Boldface words as published]

[Text] Palestinians perceive a major difference between the transitional phase and autonomy, as far as participating in efforts to achieve a peaceful settlement. Any attempt by some parties to gloss over the entire debate, despite possible differences between proponents of limited autonomy and those of extensive autonomy, would avoid dealing with the transitional phase as a first step toward establishing a Palestinian national authority with sovereignty over the territories occupied in 1967.

While the concept of autonomy concerns a population group living in a common geographical location that is actually within another sovereign state, the differences between limited and extensive autonomy as a final solution represent the minimum and maximum authorities to be enjoyed by the autonomous party.

Almost all liberation movements have experienced a transitional phase as they moved toward establishing their national authority and full sovereignty. Thus, parties to a dispute have frequently concluded agreements regulating the evacuation of occupation forces and the assumption of authority by the [native] national leadership. In most cases, such agreements provide for the continued presence of occupation authorities in certain strategic sites for an extended or brief time, in a way that does not conflict with the national authority's performance of its functions in exercising sovereignty over the country.

In addition, transitional periods have customarily witnessed important junctures that determine the characteristics of a state's future. This is due to the efforts made by each party to the conflict to whitewash the future in a way that does not conflict with the national interests of any of the parties.

In order for there to be a transitional period between the occupation and its final end, controversial matters—i.e., priorities—preoccupying Palestinians must be decided at the outset, lest they return to take revenge against the results of upcoming phases.

The desired Palestinian priorities and their justifications can be ordered as follows:

I. The cessation of Jewish settlement activity: The initial talks, especially at the start of the transitional phase, can be expected to extend indefinitely. Continued Jewish settlement in the occupied territories would inevitably

create geographical and demographic realities that would make it difficult for the Palestinian side to continue negotiating and would compel it to withdraw from negotiations. A withdrawal would place the Palestinian side in an even more difficult position, because a major incentive to participate in the peace process has centered on the need to stop the settlement process, which threatens the infrastructure of any Palestinian entity.

II. The securing of international, executive supervision and protection to mediate the transfer of authority from the Israeli Defense Ministry and Government to a Palestinian apparatus. This apparatus should be prepared as of now. In addition, international supervision over the occupied territories should continue throughout the transitional period to prevent the other side from breaching subsequent agreements.

III. Preparation for an Israeli withdrawal pursuant to security agreements designed to fulfill the security needs of all countries of the region. This preparation process should entail the elimination of signs of the Israeli military presence in Palestinian cities and camps. The development of a national police apparatus could facilitate the performance of internal security tasks until sovereignty is achieved and a national authority is established that lays the sound foundations of the state.

IV. It is critical to move quickly to head off any action aimed at diminishing the results desired by the Palestinian side. This can be accomplished by mobilizing Palestinian capabilities throughout the world, and countries that support the Palestinian people to pressure international society (especially the countries sponsoring the conference) to quickly achieve results leading to an initial Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories.

Regarding the tasks mentioned above, the legitimate Palestinian leadership is called upon to give concrete form to the declaration of independence in residents' lives by striving to develop various domestic agencies based on professional qualifications, not [personal] contacts. Any delay in this matter will necessitate reliance on the same agencies and teams that have often opposed the general national position in the past, which makes them subordinate in spirit to the Israeli occupation authority.

The Palestinian public's support of the Palestinian leadership regarding participation in the peace process represents only the start of public awareness of the leadership's plan to achieve our legitimate national goals and rights. The leadership must be on guard against any attempt to circumvent these rights in negotiations over procedural or substantive issues.

The media success achieved by the Palestinians in Madrid with international, especially American, support, should not lure us into agreeing to anything that would diminish our rights. The Palestinian position is now better than it was after the Gulf war and before Madrid, as evidenced by the PLO's prominent role in leading the negotiating process.

This media success should be endorsed as a Palestinian means of pressure to establish clear, fixed principles for starting the process. Chief among these principles is a settlement freeze.

The absence of signs of good intentions regarding self-evident issues makes it difficult to maintain Palestinian support for the process. The absence of such signs makes a Palestinian withdrawal from the entire process inevitable. Participation in the conference and negotiations does not have to result in the actualization of the prediction made by some. Such participation is a prelude to renouncing and conceding Palestinian rights. Therefore, [the threat of] a withdrawal from negotiations leaves the PLO in control of the Palestinian cause and able to curb any slide toward concessions.

Therefore, the PLO, by maintaining the initiative in Palestinian affairs and closely supervising all matters related to the negotiating process, provides a basic guarantee for achieving the Palestinian people's aspirations at the finish line.

Statistics on Conditions in Refugee Camps

92AE0175A *Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic*
9, 16 Dec 91

[Article by Dr. Samir [Hazbun], dean of Faculty of Business and Economics, Bi'r Zayt University: "A Study of the Economic and Social Data of the Camps, Part 1: "Great Majority Live Under Poverty Level, 40 Percent Unemployed"]

[9 Dec p 9]

[Text] This study forms an attempt at a diagnostic and analytical vision of the economic, social, and educational condition of one of 22 camps on the Palestinian [West] Bank. It aims at dealing scientifically with the existing situation on the basis of an almost complete field survey of families living in the camp. Forms were filled out by about 96 percent of the camp's families. Of a total of 155 families, 149 agreed to complete the form.

The study aims to shed light on the real situation of one of these camps against the background of many diverse proposals related to the question of economic development in the occupied territories. This important part of the Palestinian people, which lives under special circumstances and conditions, has not received its due of detailed research and study aimed at treating its problems on a scientific, objective basis, rather than on an emotional basis that focuses on an attempt to improve the living standards of these people, considering this to be the important point of entry for treating the problem.

While this modest attempt may seem only a first entry into the problem, it is, in fact, the first step toward a realistic beginning to contribute to dealing with what exists, but has not been included among priorities for development and growth.

Historical Sketch

The camp was built in 1949 and lies within the bounds of the municipality of Bethlehem. It has a total area of 20 dunams. It was named Bayt Jabrin after the village of Bayt Jabrin, whose [former] residents form the majority of those living in the camp. Its more common name in the area is al-'Izzah Camp.

The camp houses Palestinians who left the following villages: Bayt Jabrin, Bayt Natif, 'Allar, the Farrajin Bedouins living in Suba'-Bayt Jabrin, Bayt Dajn, [Khiras], Tall al-Safi, 'Ajuz, al-Burayj, 'Ayn Karim, and al-Malihah.

The land of the camp has been officially leased by the Jordanian Government since 1951. The international relief agency [United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, or UNRWA] fully supervises the ongoing life of the camp, including issuing building permits. Between 1967 and the present, 90 percent of the camp's buildings or housing units were repaired or rebuilt to modern building specifications.

Residents, Use Structure

Before 1960, there were about 900 persons living in the Bayt Jabrin camp. A UNRWA publication about the camp indicates that in 1967, after the war, there were 1,290 residents. Israeli statistics for 1975 indicate the presence of 840 people, while statistics for 1984 indicate about 1,080 people. According to estimates by UNRWA there were 1,261 residents in January 1987.

Results of the field survey indicated the presence of 952 persons, 9 of them residing outside the camp and 14 of them living outside the West Bank and Gaza (i.e., in various Arab countries). In addition, 6 families, with a maximum estimated total of 40 members, were not included in the field survey. Thus, the average family size in the camp was 6.3 persons.

Occupational Distribution, Work Place, Worker Numbers

Statistical results of the survey indicate the presence in the camp of 151 workers and employees who work for wages.

The statistics showed the presence of 20 workers who work irregularly or in several occupations and have no fixed place of work.

There were 28 working women, bringing the camp total to 199 male and female workers working in the West Bank and Gaza, in Israel, or in both areas, depending on job availability, not to mention men and women who work for themselves at home. Women thus constitute 14 percent of the total work force in the camp.

These results show a worker support ratio of 4.87. In other words, each working person supports about five individuals. This reflects a low standard of living and obvious financial difficulties.

Unemployment

Unemployment in capitalist countries is a phenomenon linked to the very structure of the mode of production. It is inseparable from the movement of capital and the law of accumulation.

In the so-called underdeveloped countries, unemployment constitutes a major social problem proportionate to the changes that these countries experience in economic and social structure.

Some countries experience unemployment in various forms at high rates. However, so as not to press this question, which deserves analysis in its various forms, we will remain content with a direct study of the problem at the level of the Bayt Jabrin camp, considered as a sample, or part of a whole that is suffering the same effects or difficulties.

The field study counted 268 camp residents with ages between 25 and 64. If we assume, for argument's sake, that these are the working years, then, given that there were 56 unemployed persons according to the results of the survey (using the same assumption about working years), then the unemployment rate among workers is about 21 percent. However, the real unemployment rate in the camp would reach about 40 percent if we included other ages in our computation, especially those between 15 and 25.

The analysis of unemployment contained in the results of this pre-Gulf-crisis field survey can, in itself, give us a good concept by which to judge the importance and seriousness of this phenomenon that the Palestinian community is experiencing.

Given the period of unemployment shown in the survey, we get a clear picture of the situation of the unemployed and their poor living conditions. In particular, there are no arrangements or social security in the occupied territories to help these unemployed.

Although the majority of these workers pay income tax, particularly those who worked in Israel, they draw no compensation except a severance compensation for those who worked in local institutions. If a worker loses his job and looks for new work, he draws no assistance or compensation in the interim.

In general, workers who are fired or otherwise lose their jobs in the occupied territories not only lose their salaries, but also do not draw any material compensation. Thus they are in a miserable situation comparable to that of a "lumpenproletariat."

In our analysis, we must also note how the presence of the unemployed puts pressure on working class salary levels and how competition can take place between workers. One should remember that the labor market in the occupied territories is marked by the presence of a latent reserve of workers.

Income, Monthly Family Expenditures

Income constitutes an important factor and prominent economic indicator for ascertaining the living standard of residents, and thus for ascertaining the wage levels and composition of national income.

In the occupied Palestinian territories, it is usually difficult to obtain exact figures to determine the size of realized income, especially if one relies on a field survey.

I therefore decided to commission qualified residents of the camp to fill out the form and to put suitable notes beside each question on the form, especially those related to income and monthly family expenditures.

The results of the survey, which included 149 families, indicated the presence of 25 families in the camp without income throughout 1990.

At the same time, there were about 128 families as of mid-1990 having average incomes of 972 new shekels, and 21 families with incomes lower than this.

At the beginning of 1990, 145 families had an average income of 750 new shekels, while 4 families were without income. To confirm that this drop in income for Palestinian families was not the result of security conditions or causes, we assumed that all the families had realized income and that there was no unemployment. The result was that the average income in mid-1990 was 736 [new] shekels.

These figures reflect the low standard of living not only of the residents of al-'Izzah Camp, but of all residents of the occupied territories who depend on wage labor.

The income figures show that the camp's residents live under the poverty line, which in Israel was about 1,700 new shekels in 1990. Realized income is also not equal to the prevailing minimum wage in Israel, which is 1,100 new shekels.

It was noted that, as a result, 133 families in the camp are receiving various forms of monetary and material assistance from UNRWA, the Almsgiving [zaka'] and Social Affairs Committee, and various charitable organizations. However, 16 families receive no such assistance.

Table 1: Wage Workers in the Camp by Place of Work

Place of Work	Number	Percentage
West Bank, Gaza	82	54.3
Israel	69	45.7
Total	151	100.0

Table 2: Workers in Camp by Occupation Type

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Employer	15	8.8
[Government] position	42	24.6
Skilled craftsman (carpenter, blacksmith, barber, builder)	95	55.6
Vendor	10	5.8
Services	2	1.1
Livestock raising or selling	5	3.0
Religious office	2	1.1
Total	171	100.0

[16 Dec p 6]

[Text] Fourteen families in the camp receive help from children working abroad or from the family head, who is also out of the country. As a result, it was

natural for us to find that only 23 families in the camp pay the tax, while the other families are not able, particularly since the above figures taken from the results of the questionnaire clearly indicate the overall low income level.

Table 3: The Unemployed by Length of Time

Length of Time	Number	Percentage of Total Unemployed
Less than 1 month	—	—
1-6 months	7	12.5
6-12 months	5	9.0
More than 1 year	44	78.5
Total	56	100.0

Note: The table does not include those unemployed after the Gulf crisis or as a result of Israeli measures limiting the number of workers in Israel.

The survey results on monthly family expenses formed another yardstick emphasizing the low living standard and income level. There was relative agreement with the results on income. When monthly family expenditures were classified into groups, they came out as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Monthly Family Expenses in Shekels

Income Group	Number of Families	Percentage
Less than 300 shekels	34	22.97
301-500 shekels	32	21.63
501-700 shekels	26	17.57
701-900 shekels	19	12.84
900-1,100 shekels	20	13.51
1,101-1,600 shekels	9	6.08
1,600 shekels and over	8	5.41
Total	148	100.0

In mid-1990, the monthly expenditures of 88.6 percent of the families did not reach the minimum for wage earners in Israel. One should bear in mind that the size of the Palestinian family generally averages twice the size of the family in Israel. The results of the survey also confirmed that only 5.4 percent of the residents have

monthly expenditures over 1,600 new shekels, which is the economic definition of poverty in Israel.

These indicators clearly confirm a painful economic reality that has continued for many years. No serious attention has been given to treating it scientifically and at the roots. The situation has continued to be dealt with as a product of the 1948 tragedy—as a situation to be dealt with on a purely humanitarian basis reflected in such humanitarian aid as flour, oil, tea, lentils, etc. These huge population concentrations consequently have continued to live at the subsistence level, receiving enough to renew their strength to work and continue living, without affording them the possibility of improving and developing their conditions. Although there has been a partial or relative improvement in the overall life of the camps, this does not express the expected hope for such change.

The statistics obtained about monthly family expenditures reflected the fact that these expenditures equal approximately twice the income. This confirms the fact that it is difficult for citizens to declare their true incomes.

I therefore assumed that income equals expenditures. The average for the income groups was calculated by multiplying [average income] by the number of families in Table 4. Average income was computed on the basis of

148 families (the families that declared their monthly expenditures). The average income for all families in the camp came to approximately 1,424 new shekels. In spite of this, the citizens of this camp continue to live below the poverty line.

The other hypothesis, that the income value is true and correct and that monthly expenditures per family are also correct, would prove two things: 1) that the assistance the families receive from various sources, as well as the revenues of the people of the camp working abroad, is completely spent so that these families can cover their basic needs, and 2) that these families cover the gap between income and expenditures by means of what they have saved from the past (if this exists).

In either case, this confirms that the amount saved equals zero and that investment therefore equals zero. Thus, there is no prospect for developing or changing the economic situation of this camp for the foreseeable future. Actual conditions confirm this reality, which has existed for many years.

Residents' Educational Status

The educational status of the residents of any place in the world constitutes a reliable indicator that can be used in estimating future growth and development and in formulating ideas about coming social, political, and cultural changes. It can also form an indicator of the degree of consciousness.

Table 5: Educational Status of Family Members Aged 6 and Above

Educational Status	Number	Percentage
Illiterate	75	8.82
Completed part of primary school	150	17.64
Completed primary school	148	17.41
Partially completed junior high	114	13.41
Completed junior high	109	12.82
Partially completed high school	65	7.64
Completed high school	127	14.94
Completed junior institute, college, etc.	38	4.47
Completed part of university study	16	1.88
Completed university study	8	0.94
Total	850	100.0

It was noted that 75 citizens are considered illiterate—8.82 percent of the total number of people whose educational status was measured, or 7.8 percent of the total camp population. The number of those who had partially or fully completed primary school was about 35 percent. The percentage of those who had partially or fully completed junior high school was about 26.2 percent. The figure for high school was 22.5 percent. The percentage of holders of diplomas from junior institutes, community colleges, or trade schools was approximately 4.5 percent.

The percentage of those who had studied in universities or who had finished university studies at various academic levels up to the doctorate was 2.8 percent of the total of people aged 6 and above.

The results of the field survey give a positive picture of the residents' training and degree of education. One should remember that the majority of illiterates are elderly. Most school-age residents of the camp attend schools—primarily UNRWA schools, and secondarily government schools. At other times, UNRWA helps or contributes to covering part of the expenses of junior college or university study for the camp's youth. Furthermore, they enjoy employment priority in UNRWA's apparatus and institutions.

Ages and Kinds of Families

Dividing workers by age or age group is certainly very difficult. Because studies and reports about the age of Palestinian workers in general and in the camp in particular are not available, I was forced to use the results previously arrived at. These show a total of 171 working men in the camp (classified by kind of work) and 28 working women, making a total of 199 workers, without defining their age.

Table 6: Age Distribution of Camp Residents

Age group	Number	Percentage
Under age 25	614	64.49
25-34	133	13.97
35-44	58	6.0
45-54	36	3.78
55-64	41	4.3
Above 65	47	4.93
Other (living outside camp or abroad)	23	2.41

The results of the survey show 78.46 percent of the camp's residents falling into the younger age group up to

age 34, while only 6 percent fall into the 35-44 age group. Not only does this clearly prove the presence of a high proportion of youthful age groups among camp residents, it indicates that the work force in the camp is still young and able to contribute.

Classification of the camp's families by number of members showed that there are more families than the number of housing units mentioned at the beginning of this study. This confirmed the presence of more than one family living in the same housing unit in the camp. Table 7 demonstrates this and shows the kinds of families in the camp by number of members.

Table 7: Family Types by Number of Members (Including Father, Mother, Maternal Aunt, etc.)

Number of Family Members	Number	Percentage
1 adult	9	3.76
2 adults	74	30.96
4 adults	14	5.85
1 adult, 1 or 2 children	14	5.85
2 adults, 1 child	4	1.67
2 adults, 2 children	16	6.69
2 adults, 3 children	19	7.94
2 adults, 4 children	6	2.51
2 adults, 5 or more children	17	7.11
3 adults, 1 child	47	19.66
3 adults, 2 or more children	5	2
Other	8	3.34
—	6	2.51
Total	239	100.0

Although the results contained in Table 7 indicate that families composed of two adults constitute 30.96 percent, which confirms the presence of a high proportion of young groups, families composed of two adults and five or more children constitute 19.66 percent of total families. In other words, one-fifth of the families in the camp are families with many children.

Families with one or more children (groups 5-13 of Table 7) comprise 51 percent of the total number of families in the camp. This indicates that the degree of economic dependence is very high.

General Indicators

The questionnaire revealed other indicators of the low living standard of the camp's residents. These indicators were of things considered basic necessities, and have been surpassed even in many developing countries.

For example, according to estimates by the UNRWA, which is primarily responsible for the camp, the camp has a total area of approximately 20 dunams. The total area of constructed buildings in the camp was found to be 12,430 square meters. In other words, there are 13 square meters of residence or living space per person in the camp. The results of the questionnaire also showed that 102 citizens were subscribers to the Bethlehem District Water Authority and were obtaining water from a private meter. The nonsubscribing families numbered 47 out of a total of 149 included by the survey. (UNRWA publications state that there are 125 subscribers.) One should also bear in mind that UNRWA has built three water stations in the camp to provide citizens with water.

As for electricity, the results of the questionnaire showed that there were 123 official subscribers having private electric meters in their homes. UNRWA publications indicate that there are 140 subscribers. At the same time, the results showed that there are 26 families in the camp who are not reached by electricity.

Recommendations

The survey and analyses of the results showed that Bayt Jabrin camp requires a comprehensive, two-stage plan to deal with its citizens' difficult living conditions. It is also important to safeguard the continued presence of the residents of the camp on their land, regardless of the intended results of the peace process.

I therefore believe that the first stage must concentrate on developing the camp's infrastructure. It should concentrate on the following things:

- Establishing a special project to improve the water and sewage system in the camp,
- establishing centers and practical programs to retrain the unemployed and the work force in general, in addition to programs to eradicate illiteracy,
- improving the housing conditions of citizens (rebuilding some buildings, carrying out needed maintenance, etc.),
- Building a permanent health center under UNRWA supervision in the camp to improve health services offered to the citizens and offer all necessary health services free of charge.

The second stage of the plan ought to deal with the following aspects:

- establishing small cooperative production projects to help create permanent, regular income for part of the labor force in the camp, especially the unemployed,
- formulating a complete practical plan for a social services program aimed at helping the needy and aged in the camp, as well as the unemployed. The plan would also aim at creating a fund to support the unemployed and retrain them in other occupations.

Refugee Camp Residents Complain of Rain Damage

92AE0175B Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic
15 Dec 91 p 8

[Article by Ahmad Qarra'in Jericho Press Services Office: "Aqabat Jabr Camp—Houses Without Roofs, Problems Without Solution"]

[Text] As soon as the truck turns north near the Dead Sea triangle toward the city of Jericho, the scene immediately seems strange and bizarre. It is not because of the presence of the military checkpoint on the road; it is because something resembling a ghost town or movie village designed in Hollywood comes into view. It is the camp of 'Aqabat Jabr—memories and ghosts of memories that have departed and stayed; the first journey of departure from the land of the grandparents into the land of the family and brothers; another journey from the land of the family to the land of Arab brothers to the east along the silent river. Sometimes a series of changing and repeated pictures comes to you. This camp is a canvas that might seem a mixture of symbolism, realism, and expressionism. Yet, no matter how much its features and images change, it remains a reality visible in the album of tragedy and suffering. 'Aqabat Jabr is a reality full of problems presented to reality and society. It is the reality behind the symbols in the poetry of Mahmud Darwish and behind the feeling of many poets. But lest we go past the beams of white light and be enticed by the breaths of darkness into a memory journey, we must explore the reality of the symbol/camp.

'Aqabat Jabr: Place, Reality, Suffering

'Aqabat Jabr Camp lies southwest of the city of Jericho on 2,500 dunams of land that UNRWA [United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East] leased from its owners after the 1948 disaster. The camp took in tens of thousands of residents of Palestinian villages occupied in the year of the disaster. During the sixties, the population of the camp approached 55,000. It was a center of movement, hard work, and energy. As a result of the departure of the camp's people after 1967, the population of the camp now is only about 4,000 persons. The agency provides them with a few services that help in building their life along a scale of priorities for expenditure that fits their income and resources. First comes the attempt to gain as much education as possible; then comes building a solid social base strengthened by the presence of a number of popular institutions, such as the Charitable Society for Children of Martyrs, the YMCA, the YWCA, the Beekeepers Association, the 'Aqabat Jabr Youth Center, and the Jericho Livestock Association. Some of these institutions existed before 1967; others were founded later. UNRWA itself founded a group of institutions in an attempt to improve the features of human life in the camp. These include the health clinic, the coeducational school, and the nutritional center for mothers and children. Although these institutions have fulfilled some of

their commitments, they remain inadequate because of circumstances that may not be visible, especially UNRWA's decision to reduce its services because of a deficit. Thus, what is being done generally does not live up to the goals of the agency's humanitarian role.

Problems Without Bounds, Without Solutions

Last summer greatly accentuated the camp's suffering, particularly the water shortage. The agency pumped water for limited hours every day, and water reached some areas only occasionally. Families and individuals were led to dig small holes near the water. The scene caused an international news agency photographer to say, "I imagine that I have returned to Africa. I want to photograph this so that people in Europe and America can see how the Palestinians are living. It is indeed the tragedy of the century: polluted water and germs carrying off dozens of babies." The agency clinic is inadequate, forcing citizens to pay the cost of medicines from the pharmacies of Jericho. With the water shortage, you find another tragedy—the problem of open sewers and trash heaps. The agency makes excuses. There are two or three employees for a big camp, and they are not up to the job.

Transportation is a major problem. There used to be a daily bus to the camp, but a few years ago the company with the franchise stopped, and now the citizens—students, teachers, and workers—walk to their destinations. A few more fortunate ones go by private car.

Houses Without Roofs

Recently, there were heavy rains, a blessing sent by God to benefit mankind; but so great was the quantity of this divine gift that many accidents occurred in cities, villages, and camps. Some people drowned, some were struck by lightning, and some met their fate in automobile accidents. The bitterly cold winter damaged 'Aqabat Jabr in various ways. The water caused many citizens to lose their homes. Some homes were left without roofs; others lost their walls to the water. The problem so aroused the residents that they felt they should make a genuine effort to inform the agency of the seriousness of the damage as quickly as possible and to arrive, through a series of consultations with officials of the agency, at an immediate, real solution to the problem. The agency, in a series of delays and postponements, tried to make the residents believe that there would be a radical solution. The residents were too alert for this; they formed a committee to demand the provision of as much service as realistically possible and solutions to such situations.

Residents' Reaction

On 7 December, the people of the camp gathered in front of UNRWA headquarters in Jericho, announcing a partial sit-in until the agency acted and began to solve the problem. However, their attempt ended in failure. The residents were led to announce an escalating strike on the 8th of the month. The local news media were moved to

follow the event and cover its stages, while public associations and personalities joined in the strike delegation in the spirit of brotherhood and solidarity.

Agency Promises Solution, Residents Refuse

After the strike, UNRWA sent a truckload of wood and galvanized iron as a preliminary solution. However, the residents rejected it on the grounds that it was an attempt to turn attention from the problem of homes that had collapsed. The residents demanded that an official with authority—Yves Besson—be sent to take charge of solving the problem. On 11 December 1991, UNRWA's director of operations held a press conference at UNRWA headquarters in Shaykh Jarrah. No residents of the camp attended. He promised a three-stage solution to the problem: Covers, blankets, and tents would be sent to the owners of houses hit by the disaster; A shipment of wood and galvanized iron would be sent to repair damaged houses; and a long-range plan would be approved later for building new houses to face next winter.

This position led the camp residents to respond to the agency's director of operations through the camp committee, as follows:

1. In normal democratic procedure, when a problem affecting a group or a community is reviewed, someone should be present to speak for them or represent them. We therefore protest the fact that no one from the people of the camp was present during the press conference.
2. We have not seen the blankets and aid that the agency's operations director mentioned, nor have they been presented to us by any person.
3. As for distributing tents to the owners of damaged houses, operations director Yves Buisson said that more than 200 houses had been damaged, but only 20 tents have reached the residents. The question is: How will this problem be solved?
4. As for the decision to escalate the strike and to close the agency's institutions in the Jericho area, we know that it was a difficult decision and could harm local social services and those offered to the residents, but as the proverb goes, "Sometimes one is forced to choose the lesser of two evils." We will clarify the reasons for the decision:
 - As for closing the school, the coeducational elementary-junior high school, the only school in the camp, has no doors. The bathrooms and lavatories are unsanitary and have no doors. Most of the classrooms have windows without glass. Given the weather, we therefore decided to close the school until it is repaired.
 - As for the health clinic, most medical prescriptions are unavailable and have to be bought from pharmacies in Jericho.
 - Officials of the agency have had a policy of continual delay for more than a year regarding the German

Government's grant to help the people of the camp. None of the provisions agreed on with the agency and the camp committee have been carried out.

Citizens Speak Out

Professor Mustafa al-Akhras, a member of the camp committee, said: "The purpose of the strike was to make our voice heard to the world, so that people would become acquainted with our plight. We want a solution, so we can live at the level of human beings."

Ayad al-'Alim, a youth from the camp, said: "The sit-in was a civilized way to express the suffering of the residents. We are not demanding magic from the agency. We only want our rights."

Citizen Jihad Abu-al-'Asal, a person of note in the camp, commented laughingly on the bitterness of the event: "If even the modern houses with concrete roofs leaked, you can imagine how it was with the mud and sheet metal houses."

'Awni Lafi, a recently married young man who lives with a family of 12 members, said, his face a mixture of joy and bitterness: "On the third night of my wedding, the room started leaking on us. A little later, the roof started to crumble. The neighbors rushed to help me and my bride. All we had left was a room with a roof supported by iron jacks. The agency hasn't done anything."

The people of the camp responded in common with one heart and one mind: "We are living in the 20th century. Galvanized iron and wood, and even tents will not solve our problem. We are a community that wants a radical solution. As for the agency's giving us tents, there is no solid ground in the camp on which to put up tents. The camp is one big quagmire."

This is the tragedy of the camp that huddles between the river and the mountains. At a time like this, one is at a loss what to believe, but the reality is beyond all the pronouncements. This is 'Aqabat Jabr camp, with its realities, suffering, and bitterness. The question remains: What if the agency is unable to provide services? What is our role, we the people whose problem it is? Where do our institutions stand on this issue?

ALGERIA

Possibility of 'Political Front' Rejected

92AF0338B *Paris LIBERATION in French*
19 Jan 92 p 3

[Article by Jose Garcon, special correspondent in Algiers: "The Government Vs. the Three Fronts"—first paragraph is *LIBERATION* introduction]

[Text] In a bid to sow confusion, the Algerian authorities are attempting to misrepresent a circumstantial alliance of the three main political parties, which have rallied against the Army.

The rumor spread like wildfire: The "three Fronts" as they are called in the Algerian press were about to form an "alliance" or perhaps an "axis" against the new governing authorities.

The rumor was fueled by meetings between the three political parties that would have faced off against each other in the second round of the recently cancelled legislative elections: The FLN [National Liberation Front] met with the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] on Wednesday and with the FFS [Socialist Forces Front] on Thursday; the FFS and the FIS also met on Thursday. These meetings are thought to have been prompted by the three parties' opposition to the government being set up in Algiers, which they view as "unconstitutional," but at no time did they join in a three-way conversation.

For good reason: Although very little is known about the content of the discussions, the three parties advocate fundamentally different visions of society. Consequently, a "political front" uniting them or even joint activities seem highly unlikely. "There was never any question of adopting a common platform with either one of these parties," Hocine Ait-Ahmed [leader of the FFS] said yesterday, emphasizing that the meetings were inspired "for the most part by a desire to preserve the civil peace." The FFS declared that "on the eve of Friday prayers, the goal was to avoid any incidents or confrontations, which would only cause the population to suffer" and reiterated its "rejection of either a police state or a fundamentalist state."

How, then, did these meetings come to be described as potential "alliances contrary to nature?" To begin with the FLN, three factors make the once unrivaled ruling party appear very weak since the government takeover: its poor showing in the elections, internal rifts, and most of all, the unrelenting war waged against it by Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghazali and government. Indeed, the prime minister made no secret of his desire to "consign to history" the party that monopolized power in Algeria for 30 years. That would explain the attempts by the FLN leadership to break out of its isolation. The meeting that took place on Wednesday evening between the FLN "boss" and Ahmed Ben Bella, Algeria's first president, is highly revealing in that regard. Aware of the deep hostility that Ahmed Ben Bella and Mohamed Boudiaf [chairman of the High Committee of State] share for each other, the FLN was hoping to persuade the former to withdraw his support from Sid Ahmed Ghazali's government. That did not happen.

The victor in the elections, the FIS, for its part, knows that the Army is determined to have it dissolved or banned at the slightest pretext. That would explain the low profile maintained by its interim president, Abdelkader Hachani, and his many appeals to his followers for calm and "respect for the law."

The Socialist Forces Front, by contrast, secured a place for itself with its showing (albeit a modest one) in the

elections. Its widely followed demonstration on 2 January against an "Islamic state" helped to position the party as the possible leader of the democratic opposition—a prospect that is not likely to please the new governing authorities.

Given this setting, it is obviously in the interests of the three parties to consult each other and use their "electoral legitimacy" to undermine the credibility of the new government which they contest (for differing reasons) and, more importantly, to control the political debate so as to avoid clashes in the streets which would inevitably result in a crackdown.

The Algerian authorities, however, have apparently decided to construe this seemingly circumstantial convergence of interests as "a strategic axis." Since Thursday evening, in fact, there have been constant murmurings (which substitute for true political communications in Algeria) denouncing "the full-fledged alliance and joint actions concocted by the FFS in collaboration with the sworn enemies of democracy." Yesterday, the French-language radio station, Alger-Chaine 3, opened each of its morning newscasts with a report on "the letter in which three FFS activists decried the 'separatism' of FFS leader Hocine Ait-Ahmed and his close relations with France."

Such charges, coming on top of the reaction of surprise generated by the FFS-FIS meeting, were bound to have a destabilizing effect on the party's support base. Indeed, many of its activists, voters, and sympathizers are genuinely dismayed, if not shocked, by a meeting that could lead to an alliance with a religious party which they have always considered "fascistic."

Moreover, at this juncture, it is certainly in the interest of the governing authorities to sow confusion by lumping the three parties together.

On seeing the consternation bordering on rage which the rumors have triggered in some FFS activists, one understands what is at stake in this affair.

Yesterday, FFS leader Ait-Ahmed invoked "the right to meet whomever we want, especially if our purpose is to prevent a spiral of violence" and decried "the wide-scale police operation which—as one government minister recently suggested—is an attempt to drive a wedge between the party and its leadership."

Increased Arrests, Pressure on Islamists Reported *92AF0314C Paris LE MONDE in French 22 Jan 92 p 4*

[Text] Identity checks, arrests, and searches have increased in recent days in the fundamentalist strongholds in Algiers and other cities.

Large numbers of police officers carrying automatic weapons and walkie-talkies were on patrol in various districts of the capital on Monday, and the security

measures taken after President Chadli Bendjedid's resignation on 11 January—the stationing of light armored vehicles near public buildings and numerous road-blocks—were still in place.

Monday evening, the national Gendarmerie announced that an imam of the El Maitar Mosque near Boussaada had been arrested two days earlier “for using his pulpit to incite citizens to revolt against the institutions of the state.” Three individuals carrying weapons were stopped by the police in Oued-el-Fodha, some 200 km west of Algiers, according to the Gendarmerie, which did not indicate the date of the incident.

The High Committee of State issued a severe warning to the perpetrators of recent attacks, reminding “all individuals or organizations who commit, provoke, or serve as accomplices in these incidents that it will use all means available to the state to enforce the law strictly and fully.”

In addition to an attack some 20 km south of Algiers and the hurling of a homemade bomb at the national Gendarmerie's headquarters (see *LE MONDE* of 21 January), shots were fired and a homemade bomb was thrown at a police building without injury to anyone in the eastern suburbs of Algiers during the night of Saturday to Sunday, it was reported by the directorate of security.

In other matters, the lawyer representing seven leaders of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), including Abassi Madani and Ali Benhadj, who have been held for nearly seven months in a prison in Blida (50 km south of Algiers), announced that the petition for the temporary release of the detainees was referred to the investigating judge on Monday. The lawyer, Mr. Abdenour Ali-Yahia, explained that the appeals chamber of the military court in Blida—citing “lapses of procedure”—has invalidated the judge's ruling of 14 November against releasing them.

The Algerian situation was to be raised at a summit meeting between the EEC and the United States Tuesday in Washington, according to a spokesperson for the European Commission. The meeting was to be limited to an exchange of information. (AFP)

Commentary on Boudiaf as HCE President

92AF0302A Paris *LE MONDE* in French 18 Jan 92 p 3

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] To welcome back Mohamed Boudiaf, who had left Algeria as a refugee and came back 28 years later as chief of the High Committee of State, no ceremonial aspect was spared, neither red carpet, nor honor guard, nor clique, nor crowd of admirers, driven to the airport by bus.

At about 1600 on 16 January the new chief of state of Algeria descended from the presidential plane at Houari-Boumediene Airport in Algiers. The aircraft had gone to

bring him back from Rabat on the morning of the same day. Wearing a brown suit, a cream-colored shirt, and a gray tie, he was met by General Nezzar, in civilian clothes, and the other members of the High Committee of State. He went down the exit stairway, just missed tripping, and was met by the reception committee. Held back at a distance, the reporters thought they saw him take the traditional sip of milk and taste of dates. He bowed in front of the flag, reviewed the troops in the honor guard, and then went to greet the members of the government. He embraced them all, one by one, from Sid Ahmed Ghazali, who began to clap, to a row of generals at the end of the line, as if to mark the fact that, in this country where the Army has so much power, the power of the civilians is still the greatest.

Then he headed toward the reception lounge for honored guests. It was at that point that photographers and television cameramen, no longer able to contain themselves, broke through the barriers to approach him. It was a real shambles. A French photographer, carried away by a slip of the tongue, called out: “Hamrouche, over here!” Even so, Mohamed Boudiaf turned back for a few seconds to let himself be photographed, his ascetic face and prominent cheekbones emphasizing his resemblance to Ramses II.

About one hour later at the presidential palace, flanked by the other four members of the High Committee of State, he took his oath of office with his hand on the Koran. On the evening of 16 January he made his first speech on television. His voice was firm and he did not smile. He made no effort to please his listeners. If people expected him to look like a figurehead, the occasion was apparently missed.

‘He Must Not Be a Thief!’

At the very time Boudiaf was speaking to the country, people strolling idly around the Place des Martyrs, at the foot of the Casbah, seemed almost completely to ignore this “man forgotten by history.” Two distrustful “bearded men,” operating by deduction, said: “This man must not be for the Islamists, since he was chosen by people who are fighting us.”

A young man said: “Perhaps he was once a good man, a long time ago. However, he cannot know what is going on here, because he has been living in exile.” And one of his friends went further and said: “Why have they brought out this old man? Could they not find a younger one?” A stroller remarked: “I am told that he was the right man for the job.” Was he too old? One of them asked: “Then what about Mitterrand? A mature man was needed.”

They asked themselves “whether this son of the ‘revolution’ is still faithful to the oath of the martyrs, because all the other people (in the FLN [National Liberation Front]) have forgotten it.” Rumor has it that, like Hocine Ait Ahmed, secretary general of the Socialist Forces

Front (FFS), he was not corrupted by the government. Therefore, a bystander wanted to see "these two men of history get together."

An adult asked, "But what did he come to do in this hell hole? Why did he accept this suicide mission?" A few facetious boys who have their ears everywhere were reassured because they did not hear anything said about him in range of their hearing. They said: "No one knows him. He must not be a thief."

Boudiaf Receives Ambassadors to Tunisia, France

*LD2201125992 Algiers APS in English 1010 GMT
22 Jan 92*

[Text] Algiers—Yesterday Mohamed Boudiaf, president of the High State Committee, had an audience here with El-Hadi Khediri [as received], Algeria's ambassador in Tunis, who made an account on the brotherly relations linking Algeria and Tunisia. The president of the High State Committee marked his attachment to the development of relations between the two countries and [their] two brother peoples, as well as the construction of the Arab Maghreb Union. Mohamed Boudiaf also had an audience here yesterday with Smail Hamdani, Algeria's ambassador to Paris, who rendered to him an account on the state of Algerian-French relations. The president of the High State Committee insisted before Smail Hamdani that a particular interest be granted to the Algerian community living in France.

FPLA Opposition Group Not Attending Meeting

*LD2201163192 Paris Radio France International
in French 0630 GMT 22 Jan 92*

[Text] The conference expected to gather the representatives of the Bamako government and those of the Tuareg rebellion on Algerian territory does not look all that promising. As far as the form is concerned, not all the participants have arrived yet. As far as the substance is concerned, things are more serious. Some participants will not be coming, notably the Azawad People's Liberation Front [FPLA]. Their absence raises questions about the chances of success for this meeting, as Muriel Pomponne reports:

[Begin Pomponne recording] The FPLA, which represents the hardline branch of the rebellion, justifies its absence by pointing to the attitude of the Mali Government. First, it does not recognize the constitution approved by referendum on 12 January. According to the FPLA, it excluded the population in the north. The FPLA considers that Mali authorities are not observing the preconditions for any negotiations posed by the Tuaregs during the Mopti meeting in December regarding a halt to the massacre of civilians and the establishment of an international commission of inquiry. The movement, which agreed to a truce at the beginning of November, is thus envisaging a resumption of fighting. Moreover, the front disagrees with the other movements and is leaving the Tuareg Coordination

Committee, which was supposed to permit the reunification of the various factions. On this point, it is thus a failure. If an agreement is signed at this meeting, the FPLA will not feel bound by it. This meeting was decided by the Algerians and the Malians without taking into account mediation by Frenchman Edgard Pisani and Mauritanian Baba Miske. The Tuaregs, including all their various branches, are determined to have a French presence. [end recording]

Consultative Council: Redefining Multipartyism

92AF0314B Paris LE MONDE in French 21 Jan 92 p 5

[Article by special correspondent in Algiers Jacques De Barrin: "The New Government Prepares To Move Against the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] and the FLN [National Liberation Front]"—first paragraph is LE MONDE introduction]

[Text] On Sunday, 19 January, the 188 candidates of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) elected in the first round of the legislative elections issued calls for a return "to constitutional law" and the resumption of the legislative elections. Earlier, during the night, "armed elements" attacked a guard post manned by soldiers in the town of Rounda, near Sidi Moussa, 20 km from Algiers, according to a communique from the gendarmerie. One soldier was killed and two gendarmes were wounded by automatic weapons fire. That same night, a homemade bomb was thrown at the gendarmerie's headquarters in Algiers. It caused no damage or injury. The attacks occurred as the new governing authorities prepare to modify the law on political parties, possibly to the detriment of the Islamists and the once unrivaled ruling party, the FLN [National Liberation Front], according to unofficial sources.

Mr. Mohamed Boudiaf, chairman of the Higher State Council, was described as "a true democrat" whose "realistic policies are rooted in the genius of the Algerian people." It was the greatest tribute paid to him since his return from exile and, ironically, it appeared in an editorial in the 18 January edition of EL-MOUDJAHID, the official daily newspaper of the FLN! God knows the ill will that Mr. Boudiaf harbors toward what once was the only authorized political party and which he has sworn to ruin for monopolizing history to its own benefit, just as others have appropriated Islam. But a paradox like the newspaper's tribute is not unheard of in Algerian politics, all movements combined.

The FLN of today resembles a besieged citadel whose defenders are turning their weapons against each other. The meeting between its general secretary, Mr. Abdelhamid Mehri, and Mr. Abdelkader Hachani, president of the FIS' interim executive bureau, has sent shock waves through the party. Two members of the FLN's Political Bureau denounced the move as "irresponsible behavior," an opinion shared by those once sentenced to death, the war veterans, the "sons of martyrs," and others.

Mr. Mehri tried to restore calm by explaining that his meeting with the FIS leader took place "at the request of the FIS" and "for purposes in keeping with the higher interests of the country." Nonetheless, he has agreed to convene a special session of the FLN Central Committee on 25 January. At the very least, it promises to be an animated exchange.

The mood within the Socialist Forces Front (FFS) is barely more serene. Following his own meeting with the FIS leader, FFS Secretary General Mr. Hocine Ait Ahmed had no greater luck in asserting that the meeting was not a prelude "to an alliance of any kind" and that the uproar surrounding it was an "attempt at destabilization." Most FFS activists remain unconvinced, it seems. A founding member of this prodemocracy party, Mr. Nait Djoudi, criticized what he saw as "an action contrary to our strategy" and motivated by "personal ambitions."

The Higher State Council, which has decided "to remain permanently convened," issued a communique in which it emphasized "the need to maintain order and to enforce it more strictly." The statement followed two incidents during the night of Saturday to Sunday in which a soldier was killed during a road check in Rounda, not far from Algiers, and Molotov cocktails were thrown at the headquarters of the national gendarmerie, near the Ministry of Defense. In addition, the FIS reported the arrest of some 30 candidates who won the first round of elections.

For his part, Mr. Hachani spoke on Sunday, with a crowd of journalists in attendance, and called on FIS legislators "to assume their duties and find a solution to the political crisis." In a series of messages read in public, FIS victors invited the world to witness the "great danger brought upon Algeria by the insatiable ambition of an oligarchy that history has repudiated."

A Check on Multipartyism

The new governing authority is applying itself to the task of redefining the limits of Algerian multipartyism, which had been "unrestrained, fragmented, and uncontrolled," according to Mr. Abdelhak Belkaid, minister of communications. The reform is expected to include the modification—or strict enforcement—of the law regarding political associations, the purpose being to disqualify parties "founded on religion." Will the National Consultative Council, which will soon fill the legislative void, be asked to take up the matter?

It is a very strong power structure that appears to be taking shape at the helm of the country. According to unofficial remarks published Monday by the daily newspaper *LE MATIN*, it "will not waste its time by engaging in politics or by justifying itself in the face of opposition." Its concern will be to "take concrete steps as soon as possible to stimulate the economy rapidly."

The new team in power is made up of military and civilian members and Mr. Boudiaf, "the man with an

untarnished past" who has no intention of playing a bit part. How well will they get along? After the first round of voting in the legislative elections, Mr. Boudiaf urged the Army to respect "the choice of Algerians, of Algeria's young people in particular." He expressed the view that "the authorities have not been equal to the situation" in recent weeks, and he stated that Prime Minister Sid Ahmed Ghazali and his predecessor Mr. Mouloud Hamrouche were members of "the same personnel to emerge from the magma of the FLN." "The one steps down and the other takes his place, but the mentality and the intrigues are the same...."

Will the country's energies be mobilized by Mr. Boudiaf's repeated references to the "glorious revolution of November" 1954 and his allusion to the "enemies of yesterday and today who conspire against independence and unity," in his first speech to the nation? To many young people caught up in the difficulties of their day-to-day lives, the speech was reminiscent of the Boumedienne era, and seems to have struck them as a little bit "stale."

The horizon appears bleak in every direction. One example is Algeria's elimination from the African Nations Soccer Cup. The team's defeat enraged Mrs. Leila Aslaoui, minister of youth and sports, who felt that "in the present circumstances, a good performance would have been a great boost to the Algerian people."

Gas Accord With France Renewed

92AF0302B Rabat ALMAGHRIB in French
28 Dec 91 p 6

[Text] *LES ECHOS*, the daily newspaper of French business, reported in its issue of 26 December: "Gaz de France [French Natural Gas Company] extended the validity of its contracts for the procurement of natural gas in Algeria on 24 December and signed an additional agreement to increase the quantities purchased by a little more than 10 percent."

According to the newspaper on economic affairs, Abdelhafid Bouhafs, the director of the Algerian Sonatrach Company, and Pierre Gadonneix, the director of Gaz de France, "signed agreements on 24 December providing for the delivery of Algerian natural gas to France, extending the duration of the three natural gas contracts presently linking the two companies by 10 to 15 years, depending on the case."

LES ECHOS emphasized that these contracts, concluded between 1962 and 1976, involve the sale of a total of "9.15 billion cubic meters of Algerian natural gas per year."

Furthermore, the economic newspaper stated, Gaz de France and Sonatrach have signed an additional contract for additional "quantities of natural gas that will progressively reach a total of 1.0 billion cubic meters per year over a period of 10 years."

The article in LES ECHOS continued: "Whereas in 1982 Algeria had obtained from France, in the name of North-South economic cooperation, very favorable commercial conditions for the sale of its natural gas, the present contracts are basically in line with international prices."

Recalling that in 1990 Algeria provided 29.8 percent of the natural gas consumed in France, the French business daily reported that Gaz de France and Sonatrach are also participants in the natural gas pipeline from the Maghreb to Europe, which will have an overall cost of 6.0 billion French francs.

EGYPT

Officials Discuss Proposed Banking Reform

92AF0246A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
4 Jan 92 p 11

[Text] Cairo—Some 101 banks in Egypt and hundreds of branches belonging to them are in a state of suspense with respect to what will be the outcome of the decision the People's Assembly will adopt during its present session concerning the proposal submitted by the Union of Egyptian Banks on 28 August 1991 to amend certain provisions of law 163 of 1957 concerning banking and credit law, and law 120 of 1975 concerning the Egyptian Central Bank and the banking system.

One of the most significant points of the proposed amendment is that the capital of any licensed bank should be no less than 100 million Egyptian pounds, of which 50 million should be paid when the bank is first established, that the Central Bank should have the right to accept or reject the appointment of members of the bank managing board and auditors, and to fix the rate of interest. This is in addition to other powers that would put any bank under the control of the Central Bank.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT interviewed several economic experts regarding the pros and cons of the proposed amendment and the appropriate legal position in which banks should operate.

On several occasions Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi said that banking laws should be amended consequent to the development of the economic policy that has established the principle of economic openness which allows the establishment in the country of joint financial institutes or investment and trading banks, independently or as branches of foreign or international banks. The practical application of this principle brought to light several shortcomings, especially since a large part of banking transactions are carried out with the funds of depositors who have no control or supervision of any kind on banking activities. This would place on the Central Bank the burden of preserving the depositors' funds, which by necessity calls for giving the Central Bank more jurisdictions and powers vis-a-vis the banks, especially in the field of control, so that the banks will become more

effective in the continuously developing banking system, both on the local and international levels. This would guarantee the safety of the money market in the country and ensure the implementation of the economic and monetary policies that would achieve the development plan's objectives and safeguard the depositors' rights.

Dr. 'Atif 'Ajwah, undersecretary of the Economy Ministry for research and information, said: The proposed amendments plan is based on imposing restrictions and instituting banking powers that could have a downturn effect on the economy, since it is known that monetary policy has a stronger effect in bringing about a downturn rather than an upturn in the economy because it is more effective as a reversing power than an additional economy stimulating power. The amendments concentrate on intervening in the appointment of bank directors and managing boards, on imposing financial penalties for credit violations, and setting ceilings on credit facilities. The amendments also intervene in the appointment of auditors, merger decisions, and increasing bank capital, all of which are matters that largely come under the jurisdictions of banks' general assemblies. Also the amendments fail to deal with intervening in certain monetary developments and banking methods for the advancement of financial markets, credits, and direct investment.

Dr. 'Ajwah says that most of the proposed amendments are of a controlling nature which would make every activity by the banks subject to Central Bank control. This would give the Bank powers that are contrary to corporation law 159 of 1981, considering that a bank is a shareholding company whose capital's owners have a right to make decisions that would ensure for them proper utilization of their resources in light of the outlines of the monetary policy.

Dr. 'Ajwah added: If the amendments published are implemented as they are, it means turning all banks in Egypt into public sector banks and taking away the powers of minister of economy and giving them to the Central Bank.

Amending banking laws in order to keep pace with banking development is something natural and happens in all the world countries. Indeed certain countries, like Canada, issue a new banking and credit law every 10 years, Isma'il Hasan, director of Alexandria Bank said. But, he added, the proposed amendments give the Central Bank a major role in controlling banks and checking their performance.

Dr. Hazim al-Biblawi, president of the Export Development Bank, believes that the protection of banks and their present system is basically prior control and not subsequent imposition of fines. He also believes that most of the proposed amendments concern powers of the Central Bank and increasing the powers of the Bank's managing board, particularly with regard to the Central Bank's right to appoint the bank's general manager or whoever may be in his position.

Dr. al-Biblawi said it is the Central Bank's right to intervene in order to deal with the banks' financial positions, but the proposed amendment contains an article that gives the Central Bank the right to intervene in the merger of two or more banks. This article should be reconsidered so that it would be the Central Bank's right to call for a merger, but on the condition that the merger should not take place without the approval of the other banks. Approval in case of a merger is necessary, but there is a difference between laying down conditions and imposing a merger.

Dr. Ibrahim al-Dassuqi Abazah, rapporteur of the economic committee at the al-Wafd Party, says that several reservations can be made about the proposed amendment of the banking law, including the Central Bank intervention in the formation of banks' managing boards, beginning with the chairman and ending with the members.

This intervention, he said, restricts the freedom of choice for banks' general assemblies. It would be enough to have general controls as to who would stand as candidate for the bank's managing board or for its chairmanship. The matter must first and foremost be left to the bank shareholders' general assemblies.

Also, he added, one of the negative aspects of the proposed amendments is the condition that a bank's initial capital should be \$50 million. This condition is unacceptable. What could be sufficient to establish a bank today might not be sufficient after a few years' time because of inflation. What is more important than fixing the amount of a bank's capital is the role of the bank and its activity, plus the amount of loans it grants.

Dr. Abazah added: A big capital could be suitable for a businessmen's bank or big banks. But there are commercial and other specialized banks, agricultural and industrial, that need not have a big capital as a condition for their establishment. Such a condition leads to the abolition of small and medium banks that carry out activities which major banks cannot, such as financing small industrial projects and giving low interest loans to young people to own desert land.

Dr. 'Ali Lutfi, a former Egyptian prime minister and a well-known economic expert, lists the positive aspects of the amendments. He says the deposit insurance system or participation by all banks to insure the deposits of any bank is considered to be the most positive aspect in the proposed amendments because any bank is exposed to experiencing a crisis. Therefore, it is necessary to legislate this clause in the proposed amendment of the banking law so that the depositors' funds will not be lost. Otherwise, the depositors will lose confidence in the entire banking system. Also among the positive aspects of the amendments, as Dr. Lutfi sees them, is fixing a minimum 50 million pounds as bank capital. He said this trend is sound; no banks will be established in the

future without a strong capital that would ensure for them their existence and the ability to continue to operate effectively.

However, despite these positive aspects, Dr. Lutfi agrees that there are negative aspects in the proposed amendment of the banking law. The amendments, he said, greatly boost the Central Bank powers. It is preferable to have a controlling body from the Central Bank and an inspection of banks in order to draw their attention to any mistakes that may occur so that they will be rectified. Still, decisions should be in the hands of banks and not the Central Bank.

ISRAEL

Ge'ula Kohen Explains Withdrawal of Tehiya

92AE0181A Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew
17 Jan 92 p 2

[Article by Ge'ula Kohen: "Why Did Tehiya Withdraw"]

[Text] This is not the first time that Likud left us no choice. The withdrawal today of the Tehiya movement from the government was preceded by the withdrawal of the founders of Tehiya from Likud itself after the 1978 signing of the Camp David agreements, which brought about the withdrawal from Sinai and which included an autonomy program, which, in the absence of Israeli sovereignty to precede it, would have necessarily developed into a Palestinian state.

When Tehiya decided in 1982 to join the Begin government, with the smell of the burning Yamit settlements still in its nose, it was not ignoring the fact that Likud policy is based on the autonomy program; but as long as that program was a dead letter on paper, Tehiya could advance in practice in that same Likud government the erection of hundreds of settlements in the territories of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip.

The same thing was true when two years ago Tehiya joined the Shamir government, whose "political initiative" is also based on the autonomy program: from the Tehiya viewpoint, as long as that initiative was only on paper, while settlement momentum increased in the field, Tehiya was happy to this day to give that government a majority.

To this day, since, from the day that the autonomy program for the Arabs of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip (and it is unimportant under what mantle this lady hides) got off the paper and actually made it to practical negotiations with the Arabs, that was another story.

This week in Washington the autonomy demon indeed got off the paper and was raised as an operative proposal to the Palestinian delegation: "a breakthrough" they called it both in Washington and in Jerusalem; but Tehiya saw it not as a breakthrough that would pave the road to peace, but as a breakthrough that would pave the way for a Palestinian state, with everything that implies

for our national and security existence here, and decided on its own breakthrough out of the government.

Shamir actually wants a whole Land of Israel and full Jewish settlement "up to the horizon"; he wants it, but as long as he is a captive of the autonomy trap, he cannot have it. That trap has a compelling, thankless nature such that even if you do not want something it forces you to its will: Shamir did not want an international conference; he did not want direct talks with the Palestinians; he did not want recognition of a separate Palestinian delegation (what did Shamir say about the demand of the Palestinian delegation for a room separate from the Jordanian delegation: today they want a Palestinian room of their own, tomorrow they will want a Palestinian state of their own)—he did not want those things, but the cruel legality of the trap he got himself into forced him to say "I want it."

So what Tehiya sought in its withdrawal today from the government was to "force" the government to move toward early elections and thereby give hope to Israel and her government of breaking the entrapping acceleration of what is called the "peace process."

But that is not a torpedoing of peace itself. In today's circumstances no negotiations with the Arabs will lead to peace. If there is any importance whatever to the negotiations being conducted today, it is that it is proving over and over again that the Arabs are still not ripe for any peace negotiations with us.

Why elections today?

Because every day that we continue the negotiations weakens us politically and subjects us to a further concession (it is no wonder that the Left is promising Shamir a safety net against a no-confidence vote in the Knesset...); every day that we sit in negotiations with the murderers of the PLO and the intifadah, we not only vindicate them in the eyes of the United States, but we also erode our own security and cause another Jewish victim; every day that we wait for guarantees from the United States for immigration absorption (which, if it is granted, will be granted under such conditions that we will also require guarantees for the very existence of the State...) is one more day that we do not organize to handle immigration absorption on our own.

Tehiya is a principled, ideological movement which really struggled before it withdrew. We struggled not only because it was Yitzhaq Shamir who turned "the whole Land of Israel" from a slogan into a living political demand; not only because, under Ariq Sharon, settlement in the Land of Israel and construction for immigrants acquired tremendous momentum—Tehiya struggled up to the last minute because up until the last minute there were those among her who believed that it was possible still to stop the dangerous political processes from within; there were those within Tehiya who, even as the representatives of the Israeli delegation were

already in the corridor, hoped that the government would not move from the corridor into the hall itself but would find its way out.

Only when the government went in did Tehiya have no choice but to walk out itself.

Those of little mind and faith among us may deride the notion, but it is only large-scale immigration and massive settlement that, in the final analysis, will precede peace, without quotation marks, since only those things can fill the territories of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza, which today, being largely empty of Jews, seduce and deceive the Arabs to believe that by terror and bloodshed they will succeed in getting us out of here and establishing a Palestinian state.

What will Washington say?

If Washington establishes our national order of priorities for us, we will not even stay in Jerusalem. If Jerusalem establishes her own order of priorities, we will, in the final analysis, overcome Washington, too, perhaps with some temporary confrontations, as at the time of the establishment of the State.

It is thus better that Tehiya and her sister parties on the right, Moledet and Tzomet, force the government of Israel to stop the political deterioration and push elections forward rather than have the United States and the Arabs force upon us a continuation of the political deterioration that would precede a Palestinian state.

Ben-Elisar on Autonomy, Coming Stages

91AE0181B Tel Aviv HAYARDEN in Hebrew
22 Dec 91 p 2

[Article by Eli'ahu Ben-Elisar: "The New Philosophy of Stages"]

[Text] Conditions are improving for the leadership of the autonomy administration of the Arabs of Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip. This gives practical expression to the operational and psychological revolution that has occurred among the leadership of the Arabs of the Land of Israel over the last ten years.

The absolute rejection of every idea for compromise with the Zionist entity has been pushed aside in favor of the new philosophy of stages which says that the Jews are prepared to allow us self-rule and to promise in advance to negotiate a different status, so let us take them up on it. The first stage will, thus, be self-rule, or in Israeli terms, autonomy. The second stage will be discussed starting from the third year of the existence of the first stage, and it is the Arab intention to develop it into a political entity agreeable to Israel, that would grow, over time, into an independent Palestinian state in Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, with the agreement of the Jews or without it.

Nor is a third stage missing from Arab thought processes and preparation, intended to significantly erode Israeli

territory from the 1948 lines by means of the refugees of that year; "the right of return" and the relevant UN decisions. However, that is not to be mentioned in order not to risk the start of the process, that is to say, the first stage.

There are a number of reasons for this relative sophistication, of which the main ones are the following: a feeling of increasing wear and tear on the part of the Arab population of the Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip; material fatigue on the part of the PLO leadership; the appreciation that terror, violence, and even the intifadah have not weakened Israel; the loss of a territorial basis adjacent to Israel; serious political mistakes such as the support of Saddam Husayn in the annihilation of Kuwait and the attempted coup against Gorbachev; the distancing of its Soviet patron; the strengthening of the local leadership among the Arabs of the Land of Israel; the increasing recognition that the passage of time only deepens Israel's hold on the territory.

The Israeli side needed no revolution, incentive, or encouragement to enter into negotiations over autonomy. Israel was the one that originated the idea. If you recall, Israel not only agreed to it at the time of the Camp David talks, but also conducted negotiations with Egypt, in the presence of the Americans, on the details of its implementation.

Then as now, Israel is ready for the establishment of general, free, and secret elections among the Arab inhabitants of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip to select the administrative council. The number of its members needs to be limited to the number of departments to be established within that framework.

Israel is prepared to transfer authorities in the following areas to the administrative council: administration of the judicial system; agriculture; finance, including the budget for the council, its departments and its taxes; the administrative machinery; education and culture; health; housing and public works; transportation and communication; labor and welfare; local government; local police, in Camp David phraseology "a strong local police force," including administration of prisons for offenders sentenced by local courts; religious affairs; industry, commerce, and tourism.

Israel will "withdraw the military government and the civil administration" in Camp David parlance. "There will be a withdrawal of Israeli armed forces and a redeployment of the Israeli forces that will remain for the security areas to be detailed."

Despite these far-reaching concessions that Israel is prepared to grant the Arabs of Judea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip, neither they nor their leadership should have any illusions. True, we are talking about an agreement of a temporary nature, but Israel will not be able to allow herself to infer from the temporary agreement to be achieved the "permanent status." The temporary agreement will not be allowed to include anything that would point to movement toward a Palestinian state west of the

Jordan. Indeed, Israel opposes such a possibility to the point of willingness to renounce a temporary agreement in general.

The autonomy will apply to the residents and not to the territory, from which it follows that everything connected to land space, except, of course, private property, to air space and to underground space, including water sources, will not be under the authority of the autonomous administrative council.

It should be pointed out that all those living within the borders of the municipal territory of Jerusalem, which is under Israeli sovereignty, cannot be included within the framework of the autonomy administration unless they move their residence to outside the State of Israel.

Israel has no intention of allowing the Arab side to realize their concealed and open intentions, which they have postponed out of pragmatism, for the second and third stage.

We are ready for difficult times, not only because of the vicissitudes of the negotiations between us and the Arabs of the Land of Israel, between us and the Jordanians, and perhaps between Israel and Syria. The United States will not stand on the sidelines, and our real test will be our ability to hold firm against the American administration. On most points, the Bush administration sides more with the Arab side than with us. He will try to impose his positions on him [sic].

Natore Qarta's Place in Palestine

92AE0171A Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew
10 Jan 92 pp 20-21

[Article by Roni Shaked: "They Promised Us a Minister in the Government of Palestine"]

[Text] The American security men who protected the Israeli delegation in Washington were, of course, asked also to accompany Cabinet Secretary Elyakim Rubinstein and the director-general of the Prime Minister's Office, Yossi Ben-Aharon, to synagogue. When they arrived, the bodyguards were astonished to discover in the synagogue three other persons who joined the prayers: ultraorthodox Jews, with tags on the lapels of their clothing on which was written "The Palestinian Delegation." One of the security men burst out in hearty laughter. "Is it not funny?" he asked the Natore Qarta' member Hayim Tzvi Freiman, a member of the Palestinian advisory delegation to the peace talks. "We are only praying together," Freiman replied. "They and we are Jews. They are Zionists, and we are Palestinian Jews."

Several hours after the joint prayers, Hayim Freiman held a press conference. To media persons from Japan, Australia, and South America, he explained why the world must support the establishment of a Palestinian state and to act for the destruction of the Zionist entity. After the conversation with the journalists, Freiman met

with Hanan Ashrawi and Nabil Qasim, members of the Palestinian delegation, and coordinated positions with them on informational matters.

This strange affair between the extreme splinter of Natore Qarta' and the PLO has been going on already for many years. In Madrid and in Washington, the cooperation reached a zenith: members of Natore Qarta' received official status within the PLO delegation. Rabbi Moshe Hirsch, who presents himself as the foreign minister of the ultraorthodox community, demanded a week before the Madrid Conference to be part of the Palestinian delegation. He handed to Faysal al-Husayni a letter for the PLO leadership in Tunis, in which it was argued that the delegation includes Muslims and Christians, and it therefore must include Jews, as well. The letter was signed by "The Council of Seven of Natore Qarta'." Rabbi Hirsch says that this is a secret council that leads Natore Qarta'. According to him, he is the only member of this council who is known by the public, due to his position as the foreign minister.

Yasir 'Arafat received this letter by facsimile, and three days later announced in Paris that the Palestinians had decided to add two Jews to their delegation. In the PLO, the affiliation of Natore Qarta' was regarded as a propaganda contribution to their cause. Hayim Tzvi Freiman and Moshe Dov Beck, two members of Natore Qarta' from New York, were added as members to the Palestinian advisory delegation. "We preferred the advisory delegation, which operates behind the scenes, in order not to sit at the same table as the Zionist delegation," Rabbi Hirsch explains. The two were housed in Madrid in the same hotel as the Palestinian delegation, on the floor where Faysal al-Husayni resided.

Before the bilateral talks began in Washington, it was decided in the PLO to add another Jew to the delegation. Hayim Freiman was joined this time by Avraham Neuberger and Hay Kretchmer. In Madrid, it was the Americans who paid the hotel bills and the other expenses of the Palestinian delegation, including those of Natore Qarta'. In Washington, the PLO paid their expenses. The PLO even paid for the telephone conversation that I had with Hayim Freiman, for more than half an hour, between Jerusalem and the Grand hotel in Washington.

"I am performing a good deed here," Freiman told me over the telephone. "I am acting to save Judaism from Zionism. We are engaged in information activity: we held press conferences, we met with media people from all over the world, I was interviewed for television stations. We prepared written material—press releases, and we disseminated them to the journalists in Washington. We are explaining that Zionism contradicts the Jewish religion, and that the State of Israel is not the state of the Jews, but rather the state of the Zionists. We are saying that for that reason, we prefer the alternative, Palestinian, sovereignty that will arise out of the negotiations, and Jews who do not recognize Zionism can also join it. Our presence in Washington is definitely an

expression of solidarity with the Palestinians. In this manner, they also seek to emphasize that Jews and Arabs can live together."

One of the appearances of the Natore Qarta' members in Washington, which were given broad coverage, was on 9 December, the fourth anniversary of the intifadah. The members of Natore Qarta', together with the Palestinian delegation headed by Mubarak 'Awad, who was expelled from Israel at the beginning of the intifadah for subversive activity, stood opposite the Israel Embassy for a special prayer—for the memory of those who were killed in the intifadah, for the establishment of a Palestinian state and for peace.

When I asked Dr. Sami Kaylani, a member of the Palestinian delegation, to tell about the members of Natore Qarta', he burst out in laughter: "They believe in their way, even though we know that they are unable to exert influence in Israel. But it is definitely a contribution to our information activity." Faysal al-Husayni was a little more respectful: "They asked to join the delegation, and we honored their desire. We do not discriminate. If a Jew thinks that he is a Palestinian—that is good for us."

The Americans took Natore Qarta' quite seriously. Bob Silverman, who was until a few months ago the assistant American consul in Jerusalem, was appointed as the liaison person with Natore Qarta'. He brought them together with the chief of the Israel-Palestine affairs desk in the American State Department and with other officials in the Middle East department.

[YEDI'OT] Freiman, are you an enemy of Israel or are you just naive?

[Freiman] I am not naive. I am an idealist. I work for the Holy One Blessed Be He. I feel as if I were Our Father Abraham. I am acting and carrying on for the sake of peace, bridging between Jews and Arabs. For us, the PLO is not an enemy, we regard the PLO as the government of the Palestinians.

[YEDI'OT] And who gives you instructions?

[Freiman] Rabbi Moshe Hirsch in Jerusalem. Every day, he speaks with Faysal al-Husayni, and afterwards he contacts me in Washington and tells me what happened and what is to be done."

The secular [Jews], who are not acquainted with reality in Me'a She'arim, think that Rabbi Hirsch is the authentic representative of the residents of the neighborhood. In fact, in Me'a She'arim, as well, Rabbi Hirsch is a strange phenomenon, an opposition to the population. The small extreme splinter of Natore Qarta', as whose foreign minister Rabbi Hirsch presents himself, numbers at most approximately 150 persons. Most of them live in the Me'a She'arim neighborhood in Jerusalem, and their center is the "Torah and Fear [of God]" yeshiva.

Several families of this splinter, which is also known as the splinter of the men of Katzenelbogen, live in

London and in New York. They have a hearty hatred of the State of Israel and of Zionism, which is regarded as a repudiation of Judaism, and explain: "A Jewish state will be established only when the Messiah comes." The PLO and its hope of establishing a Palestinian state are a "divine salvation" for them, which brings nearer the redemption.

Rabbi Hirsch does not squirm when he is asked to explain the marriage with the PLO: "The PLO is for us a substitute for the spiritual pest that is called the State of Israel. Heaven helped and aided by proposing a compromise substitute, which does not impair the principles of the Jewish faith. We are not members of the PLO, we identify with those who negate the state of the Zionists. Zionism brings disasters to the people of Israel. The Zionists changed the concept of Judaism as faith in God and in his Torah to a substitute concept of nationalism, which is based on land and language. The intifadah is a divine act. When thousands march into gunfire and rise up, that is divine. Because is it against Zionism."

He was born 58 years ago into an ultraorthodox family in New York. He immigrated to Israel in 1955, going first to the "Slobodka" yeshiva in Bene Brak, and afterwards to the "Hebron" yeshiva in Jerusalem. A betrothal matched him with the daughter of Rabbi Aharon Katzenelboygen, the head of the "Torah and Fear" yeshiva, who split from Natore Qarta' and formed an extreme ultraorthodox splinter. This splinter is today headed by the Rabbi Moshe Hirsch's brother-in-law, Rabbi Hayim Katzenelboygen.

"I studied and taught at the 'Torah and Fear' yeshiva," says Rabbi Hirsch, "and I came to serve as the assistant of Rabbi 'Amram Blau, who was at that time the head of Natore Qarta'. I was the operations officer, maybe more than that. We organized anti-Zionist activities, such as the burning of flags or marches with black flags on the Zionist Independence Day. I do not remember how many times we burned Israel flags—among us it became a tradition to burn Israel flags on Independence Day and on Lag B'Omer. During the Six Day War we sat in the shelter of the yeshiva and prayed that the Zionists would suffer a blow."

Several months after the Six Day War, Natore Qarta' began to collaborate with the Palestinians, mainly by signing joint declarations and manifestos. Rabbi Hirsch became a known figure among the Palestinian leadership. He frequented the homes of leaders in the territories, and, of course, strived to publish a press release after each such visit. He has many photos: with the Mufti of Jerusalem, with Faysal al-Husayni, with Hanna Sinyurah, with Bassam al-Shaq'ah of Nabulus, and with other Palestinian leaders. The Palestinian leadership made a pilgrimage to the marriage of his son Yehoshu'a in 1986. Anwar al-Khatib came to his home in Me'a She'arim with a bouquet of flowers. The Mufti came and prayed. The kefiyyehs were mixed in a black-garbed crowd. Hirsch even hired a band of Druze, in order to entertain the Palestinian invitees.

After the international recognition that the PLO received from the U.N. in November 1975, the men of the Katzenelboygen splinter sent a letter of congratulations: "Dear Mr. 'Arafat," it was written there, "accept our congratulations on the occasion of the UN's recognition of you and of the Palestinian people. Your positions correspond to ours. We also seek the disappearance of the Zionist state. We seek to continue to live as a religious community. Judaism and Zionism contradict each other. We await the Messiah, because only he will bring the redemption. Until then, we prefer to live under Palestinian sovereignty." In the letter they propose to 'Arafat cooperation with the "Palestinian Jews."

Since then, the members of the extreme splinter of Natore Qarta' proclaim day and night that they want to join the PLO Palestinian state when it is established, and even to participate in its government. Rabbi Hirsch: "Palestine President 'Arafat promised me several times, and he also said this on Jordanian television, that when the Palestinian government is established—I will be the minister for Jewish affairs. When the Palestinian state goes from exile to redemption, I will sit with 'Arafat, and not in the corridor."

Hirsch conducts an unending dialogue with 'Arafat, and not only on political affairs. When the "Eros" sex shop opened a branch in Jerusalem, Natore Qarta' wrote a letter of complaint to 'Arafat: "The Zionists are corrupting morals in the Holy City." In their imagination, they surely saw the "President of Palestine" hurrying to blow up the abominable store.

In the PLO they know that throughout the world there is no distinction made between a religious Jew and a member of Natore Qarta'. When members of Natore Qarta', in traditional Jewish garb, declare in the international media that they seek common existence for Jews and Arabs under Palestinian rule—they are warmly accepted by the PLO as a first-class propaganda asset.

In the eighties, Rabbi Hirsch became the favorite of the editor of the AL-FAJR newspaper, Hanna Sinyurah, who was then one of the chief PLO propagandists in the territories. Sinyurah turned Hirsch into his permanent partner at lectures—before both Jews and Arabs. The words of calumny against the state that were spoken at those lectures by Rabbi Hirsch were much more extreme than Sinyurah's words, and many times the Jewish listeners demanded that the rabbi be removed from the hall.

In the AL-FAJR newspaper, the legality of the State of Israel [as published]. His articles were translated also in the English edition of the newspaper, which is distributed in the United States of America. Photos of Rabbi Hirsch with Palestinian figures were always published prominently there.

Rabbi Hirsch is well aware of the strength of the media. "With one telephone token I reach potentially two billion persons," he says. He does not miss a single

chance of getting to the media and publishing his scurrilous words against the State of Israel. The letters of Natore Qarta', which are addressed to world leaders, state that Natore Qarta' in Jerusalem number several tens of thousands. But in Me'a She'arim they refuse to relate to him seriously: "Leave the idiocies of Rabbi Hirsch," I was told there. "He represents only a few families of nuts like him."

Even the Zionist media are kosher for him. Hirsch: "I appear on television and speak with the Israeli media, in order to tell the Jewish public what the Zionist brainwashing is doing to it. The Zionists must be fought with their own weapons. Those who say that I am publicity crazy are the religious circles who do not hold my opinions, who worship the Zionist golden calf due to the temptations that the Zionists give to them."

In April 1987, when there began to be talk of immigration from the Soviet Union, the members of Natore Qarta' hurried to send a letter to Mikhail Gorbachev, in which they asked that the Jews be allowed to emigrate wherever they wished. "We request of you that you not give the Jews the status of refugees. We are the Natore Qarta', who number thousands of families in the Holy Land and tens of thousands abroad, we reject the assertion that the Jews belong to the Zionist state," it was written in the letter, which was given to the Soviet consulate in New York.

The intifadah led to practical cooperation. During the first two years of the intifadah, the members of Natore Qarta' contributed \$20,000 to hospitals in East Jerusalem and in the territories. Faysal al-Husayni waited for Rabbi Hirsch at the entrance of the al-Maqasid hospital in East Jerusalem and visited with him in the wards holding persons who were injured in the intifadah. Rabbi Hirsch gave each patient a bag of sweets and a letter of encouragement.

[YEDI'OT] Why did you donate the money?

[Hirsch] All over the world, they saw the way in which the Jews in Israel treat the non-Jews. So we decided to announce that whoever commits such acts against the Palestinians are not Jews, but Zionists. We donated the money in order to ensure that the good relations between Jews and non-Jews in the diaspora are maintained. Why should the Jews suffer because of the crimes of the Zionists?

The Palestinian declaration of independence in November 1988 was a joyful event in the Natore Qarta' enclave in Me'a She'arim. This time, the letter to "President 'Arafat" opened with the word "Mabruk." The members of Natore Qarta' asked him to annex them to the territory of the Palestinian state. In February 1988, a member of Natore Qarta', Hillel Deutsch, was sent to serve as a representative of "the Jewish refugees in Palestine" on the boat of the expellees. In May 1988, Palestinian flags were flown in Me'a She'arim and giant advertisements against the State of Israel were placed in

the NEW YORK TIMES. After the murder of Abu Jihad, Rabbi Hirsch published a mourning notice in AL-FAJR.

[YEDI'OT] Do you not think that you are a tool in the hands of the PLO?

[Hirsch?] When the government grants benefits to the populace, is that in order to exploit the residents or to do well by them? Every meeting between persons and groups, or governments, is for the purpose of mutual exploitation. Just as they benefit from our appearances alongside of them, this is also of benefit to us.

Natore Qarta' are now preparing for the second round of talks in Washington. "We will have representatives also in this round," Rabbi Hirsch promises, "who will help to bring about the removal of Zionism."

[Boxed item]

'Sometimes the Blood Goes to Our Heads, And Then He Gets It'

"Rabbi Hirsch just does not count," said Yehuda Meshi-Zahav, "the operations officer" of the ultraorthodox community in Jerusalem. "It is the Israeli press that built up this monster. In our neighborhood in Me'a She'arim, nobody pays any attention to him. He brings shame on the ultraorthodox community. Rabbi Hirsch? Since when is he a rabbi? He is not a rabbi at all, and he is not ordained to the rabbinate. The religious court of the ultraorthodox community has forbidden him to appear as the foreign minister of the ultraorthodox community, so he got wise and decorated himself with the title 'Foreign Minister of the Ultraorthodox Jews.'"

"He represents nobody. He has no official function. He holds no post. He is nothing. His 'Council of Seven' is also a council of wise men of Chelm. He is tricking the world, with no one standing behind him, not even a minor rabbi. Even in his small splinter he has no function. He is an institution on his own. He is a media scoundrel.

"There are so many eccentrics in the Me'a She'arim neighborhood, so there is one more who is called Hirsch. Sometimes the blood goes to our heads, and then he gets it. A few times, pitch was poured into his home. He received blows, slaps, and was spat upon by passers by, especially when things are published in the press in his name. There is not one synagogue in Me'a She'arim where he can enter and pray, aside from the synagogue of 'Torah and Fear.' He is not even allowed to enter the central synagogue of the neighborhood. People do not want him to pray in their quorum.

"In Me'a She'arim, the PLO is regarded as an organization of murderers in every way. Anyone who joins up with the PLO or encourages them has a verdict of "pursuer"—a Halakhic concept that says that he gives support to a murderer. This Hayim Freiman, he is in no way one of us. He is of foreign manufacture. He was in

the neighborhood before the Madrid Conference and gave a speech. He spoke for the PLO, he spoke for the murder of Jews. The residents here got heated up and beat him." [end of box]

Possibility of Free Elections for Gaza City

TA3001170492 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR
in Hebrew 30 Jan 92 p 1

[Excerpt] Discussions are being held in the defense establishment on the possibility of holding free elections for the municipal authority of Gaza City. This is after an earlier decision to establish a governing committee in the city, headed by Attorney Fayiz Abu-Rahmah, encountered many implementation difficulties. Defense sources report that since the decision on the creation of a governing committee was publicized there have been numerous threats made against Abu-Rahmah, such that, according to the conventional assessment, he could not be placed in charge of the municipal establishment in the city. Consequently, the defense establishment is reevaluating the possibility of establishing a process of democratic elections in Gaza, in which people and lists, whose candidates are not involved in terrorism and have no prior record of security offenses, could run for public office. The elections, should it be decided to conduct them, will be held on the responsibility of the Civil Administration. The same sources said that the elections in Gaza will be held without any link to, and even before the establishment of, autonomy in the territories. For the present only Gaza City is being discussed, but there are also thoughts about holding similar elections in cities on the West Bank. [passage omitted]

JORDAN

Bankers Review 1991 Performance

JN1201102192 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English
11 Jan 92 p 7

[Article by Salam al-Shawwa: "Special to JORDAN TIMES"]

[Text] Amman—The financial performance of the banking sector in Jordan during 1991 was bright enough to wipe away the uncertainty and uneasiness of the first three months when the Gulf war clouded the economic climate of the region.

General managers of several banks interviewed by the JORDAN TIMES over the past week reported that, after being worried over the financial performance of their banks for months, they had achieved varied results ranging from a slightly better profitability than that recorded in 1990 to a higher level of 50 percent above the profit figure of the previous years.

The bankers, however, complained of being awash with cash and of struggling with high liquidity, which has increased tremendously due to the large-scale deposits of returnees from the Gulf countries.

They seemed to agree on many aspects of the central bank policies, except those which covered the methods used to merge some institutions against their will. Following are excerpts of the interviews:

Arab Bank Ltd.

Chairman and General Manager 'Abd-al-Majid Shuman said that the Arab Bank's operations in the Kingdom improved in the second half of last year and that 1991 profit was slightly better than that of the previous year. He noted that deposits increased by about 20-25 percent, due to the influx of returnees who, on the negative side, affected the volume of transfers which regularly nourished the bank's cross-border business.

Mr. Shuman said business in general was good, and that the bank would focus on extending credit to support projects by the returnees and industry, which would promote exports.

The Arab Bank chairman dismissed the notion that Jordanian banks were having major problems with bad debts and repayment capabilities, and mentioned that the Arab Bank has less than one percent of its portfolio as doubtful credits.

Mr. Shuman concluded the interview by praising the move of the central bank to free interest rates to forces of supply and demand. He highly valued the hefty increase in foreign exchange reserves that the central bank succeeded in building.

Jordan Kuwait Bank

"It was a good year," Jordan Kuwait Bank General Manager Muhammad Jamjum said. "The footing of our balance sheet almost doubled during 1991, exceeding 100 million Jordanian dinars."

Mr. Jamjum said that deposits soared by 90 percent over the 1990 total and foreign currency deposits shot up by nearly 200 percent. He added that the bank's liquidity had risen by 36.5 percent.

"I believe that profitability has improved by at least 50 percent, despite being hurt tremendously during the first three months, because the bank carried the "Kuwait" name, and that caused a big drop in deposits," Mr. Jamjum said, adding that the bank has now recovered by making a good profit and recouping lost deposits.

Mr. Jamjum pointed to the industrial sector as being the major area set for growth and profitability, for both the national economy and the banking sector in 1992. He further predicted that banking in Jordan was going through a development process being revitalized by new management, or "new blood," as he put it.

The results, accordingly, would be a definite change in banking services, Mr. Jamjum said.

Mr. Jamjum disagreed with the system of bank merges and said that reducing the number of financial institutions in the kingdom should be done by merging a weak entity with a strong one, and not through amalgamating two weak banks, thus achieving an insignificant body.

Business Bank

Business Bank General Manager Fakhri al-Bilbaysi described 1991 as "good enough," since financial performance was strong to bring the year to a no-loss ending after the Business Bank took over the three branches of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International [BCCI] in Jordan.

Mr. al-Bilbaysi explained that, during the Gulf crisis, deposits went down and profit decreased by 20 percent compared to the previous months of 1990.

The Business Bank general manager, who previously headed BCCI in Jordan, said that, from March 1991 until July 5 1991, when the central bank closed BCCI in Jordan, the three branches lost 25 percent of deposits.

"In November and December, the Business Bank succeeded in revitalizing its operations and achieved results that made it easy to end the year without any loss," Mr. al-Bilbaysi said.

Mr. al-Bilbaysi described imports and exports as "the bread and butter of the economy" and pointed to earnings from foreign exchange and travellers checks as other main sources for banking profits.

Mr. al-Bilbaysi said that Jordan was overcrowded with banks and though competition was healthy, he supported mergers on solid bases and at the free will of the banks. He stood firm against compulsory mergers and said: "It is not the decrease in number of banks that is behind the mergers. It is coming up with solid banks."

Jordan Gulf Bank

Jordan Gulf Bank General Manager Walid Khayrallah said that the bank's year-end figures should not be considered indicative of performance and should not be read into, because Jordan Gulf Bank was undergoing a restructuring process "to meet the requirements of its customers on solid and sound bases."

Mr. Khayrallah, however, said that, "In general, performance was good. We were actually afraid of taking off after the end of the Gulf crisis, but deposits increased and things went back to normal averages," the general manager said.

Mr. Khayrallah pointed to the controversy over mergers, but expressed satisfaction that these mergers would create a better financial climate, along with the policies of reforming the banking laws and regulations.

Industrial Development Bank

Tahir Kan'an, general manager of the Industrial Development Bank [IDB], revealed that 1991 was a record year in terms of loan extensions.

"If there had been no crisis, it could have been even a better year," Dr. Kan'an said. Amazingly, the IDB showed good performance in 1991."

The IDB chief predicted that the export sector would continue to lead in the national economy, as it was the nontraditional area of business and it had shown the best performance.

Dr. Kan'an described the quality of banking in Jordan as good, but not good enough compared to the international level. He said that bureaucracy and slow service were the main features of banking in Jordan, and he hoped that the process of consolidation and mergers would show better aspects.

British Bank of Middle East

Derek Kelly, general manager of the British Bank of the Middle East [BBME] said he expected better performance last year than in 1990, though "it was a difficult situation."

"By the end of March 1991, BBME was getting back on track as we expected. Since July, performance has improved," he said.

Mr. Kelly explained that, during the Gulf crisis, especially in January, the bank's deposit portfolio dropped by 25 percent. However, he noted, the returnees reversed the trend and the bank opened over 1,000 new accounts during the late months of last year.

The BBME general manager described central bank policies as "sensible," as they focus on rectifying the situation of small and weak banks.

"Weak banks in the market make everybody nervous," Mr. Kelly said.

Mr. Kelly emphasized the importance of maintaining closeness with customers, and said the BBME would be updating its systems and style of services during this year.

Arab Jordan Investment Bank

The deputy general manager of the Arab Jordan Investment Bank, Hani al-Qadi, said that profit for 1991 was good, better than the previous year, although the figures might not reflect the increase because the bank was financing the cost of setting up six new branches in Jordan.

Mr. al-Qadi said that liquidity was high at the bank, and he credited the returnees for making their deposits and bringing the large increase. He noted that liquidity might stay high for some time, pending the search for credit-worthy borrowers.

LIBYA

Jallud Visit to Pakistan Receives Lukewarm Response

*BK2501052092 Islamabad THE NEWS in English
24 Jan 92 pp 1,5*

[Text] Islamabad: The Libyan top leader 'Abd al-Salam Jallud's mission to muster support for Tripoli against mounting American and Western pressure has not produced the desired results.

An informed diplomatic source told THE NEWS that Pakistan had shown lukewarmness basically because of a somersault in Tripoli's stand on the occupied Kashmir that took place during Jallud's sojourn in New Delhi a couple of days ago.

"Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif took up the issue with the Libyan visitor during talks with him on Wednesday and gave a cold-shoulder to what Jallud came here for," the source said.

Tripoli included Kashmir along with Palestine and other international disputes in a draft resolution circulated in the United Nations General Assembly seeking a discussion on terrorism and linking the phenomenon to unresolved problems of nationalities.

New Delhi protested to Libya over inclusion of Kashmir. Tripoli sensed the Indian anger that came at a time when it needed maximum foreign support in the face of a general hostility prevailing against it in the world.

Jallud made an unscheduled stopover in India to appease New Delhi. He met Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and told him that it was a "mistake" on the part of Libya to include Kashmir as an unresolved issue. "Libya has dropped the move as it realised the mistake," he was quoted as saying to him.

But in the meanwhile, India which is ordinary member of the Security Council nowadays, voted for the resolution in the forum "urging Libya to cooperate with the United States immediately, fully and effectively in establishing the responsibility for the bombing of the airliner."

Pakistani officials were concerned over a major shift in the Libyan stand on Kashmir and they conveyed it to Jallud as well, the source said. A Foreign Office spokesman's refusal to comment on the Security Council resolution "unless its full text was available," carried a clear message for Tripoli.

He had added on Thursday that Islamabad being a signatory to the anti-terrorism convention is committed to respect the international law.

Tripoli chose Islamabad to send its top diplomat in the hope of what an official said "capitalizing on Pakistan's strained relations with Washington."

But Islamabad has its own problems. It is under tremendous US pressure and squeeze due to its peaceful nuclear program.

Although Islamabad declined to accept strong opposition put up to Jallud's visit by the American embassy here, it has hardly been productive from Tripoli's point of view. The US diplomats' move was part of Washington's worldwide efforts to "single out" Libya like Iraq. The excuse this time is however different.

Official level apart, Libya has special and strong unofficial connections with some political parties, particularly PPP [Pakistan People's Party] and JUI-F [Jama'iat-i-Ulema-i-Islam Fazalur Rehman Group], a fact that has nothing to do with the level of its relations with Islamabad. Ms. Benazir Bhutto who enjoys special respect in Tripoli met Jallud here on Thursday.

Maulana Fazalur Rehman, JUI Secretary General, has given a call for protest against the recent Security Council resolution. But observers noted that the JUI leader had conveniently ignored Tripoli's U-turn on Kashmir.

Economic Cooperation Discussed With Swiss Officials

*LD3001094592 Tripoli JANA in English 1718 GMT
29 Jan 92*

[Text] Tripoli, Ay al-Nar [January] 29, JANA—The under secretary for international cooperation affairs of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation held a meeting today in Tripoli with the Swiss trade and economic delegation which includes a number of businessman and directors of financial enterprises and Swiss companies.

During the meeting the under secretary stressed the need for the continuation of such visits to stand upon the civilized achievements realized in the Great Jamahiriya as well as industrial trade and agricultural developments. The under secretary confirmed the willingness of Great Jamahiriya to promote its commercial and industrial relations with Switzerland in the interest of both countries.

The under secretary expressed the Great Jamahiriya's welcome for the contribution and involvement of the Swiss companies in the agricultural projects and developments schemes.

The meeting was attended by the secretary general of the chambers of commerce and the chairman of Tripoli Chamber of Commerce and the Swiss commercial attache of the Swiss Embassy in the Great Jamahiriya.

MAURITANIA

Two New Political Parties Established

LD2001102592 Nouakchott ORTM Radio in Arabic
2030 GMT 16 Jan 92

[Text] A new political party came into existence yesterday, which is the Democratic Social Union [al-Ittihad al-Ijtima'i al-Dimuqrati], which has been officially approved by the receipt no. 14, issued by the Ministry of the Interior, Post and Telecommunications. A new political party came into existence today under the name of the National Party for Unity and Democracy, [al-Hizb al-Watani li'l-Wahdah wa'l-Dimuqratiyah] to the receipt no. 13, issued by the Ministry of the Interior, Post and Telecommunications, on 14 January 1992.

Saddam Congratulates President on Reelection

JN3001092692 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0820 GMT
30 Jan 92

[Text] Baghdad, 30 Jan (INA)—President Saddam Husayn has sent a congratulatory cable to his brother Maaouiya Ould Sid'Ahmed Taya, chairman of the Military Committee for National Salvation and president of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, on the occasion of his victory in the presidential elections. The cable says:

We congratulate you on your winning of the presidential elections, which reflected the fraternal Mauritanian people's confidence in and rallying behind your wise leadership. On this happy occasion, I am glad to send to your excellency the warmest greetings and the most sincere fraternal sentiments, wishing you personally good health and happiness, and wishing the fraternal Arab Muslim Mauritanian people further progress and prosperity. I also wish brotherly relations between Iraq and Mauritania continued development and growth in the interests of our two peoples and the Arab and Islamic world. Peace be upon you.

MOROCCO

Opinions, Reactions to Algerian Elections Viewed

92AF0264A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic
4 Jan 92 p 14

[Analysis by Talhah Jibril]

[Text] Rabat—Moroccans are following with great interest the results of the first round of Algerian elections, which placed the Islamic Salvation Front [FIS] in the forefront of political parties in Algeria. Moroccan newspapers have devoted extensive space to the analysis of these results and have been covering reactions to them inside and outside Algeria.

Although all Moroccan political forces, especially the opposition, have praised the fairness of these elections and the neutrality of the Algerian Government and

administration, they differ in their analysis of the surprises produced by the elections, especially the ascendancy of the FIS. It can be said that the FIS' nebulous position to date on the [Western Sahara] problem has made Moroccans cautious in their treatment of the FIS' obtainment of a majority.

Moroccans, more than others in the region, are clearly concerned with Algerian affairs because of the special nature of relations between the two countries and the effects of developments in Algeria on the Western Sahara issue, which Moroccans, both officials and ordinary people, consider a crucial, high priority issue.

Moroccan concern with Algerian elections is also related indirectly to Moroccan elections, which are scheduled to take place in June 1992, if a way can be found out of the problem of the postponed referendum in the Western Sahara.

Moroccan concern with Algerian domestic conditions was indicated by the desire of the Moroccan monarch, King Hassan II, during his visit to Algeria a year and a half ago to hold discussions with a number of leaders of Algerian parties. At the time, it was noted the King Hassan devoted more time to Abassi Madani, the leader of the FIS, and Hocine Ait Ahmed, the leader of the Socialist Forces Front [FFS]. The FIS and the FFS obtained first and second ranking, respectively, in Algerian elections.

More than seven years have passed since elections were held in Morocco. During this period, the Moroccan political arena has seen a number of changes in majority and opposition parties and in the Islamic fundamentalist currents, which have yet to obtain official permission to legally engage in public activity.

Because Morocco's experience is inarguably of a special nature, Morocco is unlikely to experience resounding surprises of the type which occurred in Algeria. Political plurality existed in Morocco even before the country gained independence. It was also legislated constitutionally in 1958. Although the political plurality experiment was put on hold after a state of emergency was declared and the constitution was suspended in the mid-sixties, the Moroccan arena has maintained its basic elements, albeit with some changes, particularly the decline of the left among young people and the growth of fundamentalist forces.

Therefore, when elections occurred in Algeria with such transparency, ordinary Moroccans wondered what the results would be if elections were held in Morocco in the same manner as in Algeria.

This question is actually being posed more by the opposition, which has always doubted the credibility and fairness of past elections.

In their coverage of Algerian elections, opposition parties have focused on the Algerian Government's fairness

and impartiality, always having in mind its criticisms of the Interior Ministry, which supervised previous elections.

But what are the reactions to the results of Algerian elections?

On an official level, neither the government nor the official media issued any criticism. The official media summarized the Algerian election results without any commentary, as did semi-official newspapers, which published the news of the elections in an extremely terse manner.

The newspapers of the majority parties treated the subject differently. RISALAT AL-UMMAH [THE NATION'S MESSAGE], the mouthpiece for the Constitutional Union (government majority), carried an editorial entitled "Boumedienne's Second Death." This editorial deemed elections tantamount to putting on trial the policy of late Algerian President Houari Boumedienne, whose policy has been stamped on Algeria for a number of years. The editorial stated that the election results are a guilty verdict against the National Liberation Front [FLN], because of its political failure. The newspaper hoped that the FIS would not make the same mistake.

The newspapers of the National Alliance of Parties (governmental majority) praised the fairness of the elections. They published the election results but did not analyze them in detail.

The opposition parties differed in their positions on the elections.

The Istiqlal [Independence] Party expressed cautious sympathy with the FIS. The party's newspapers stated that repression had helped the FIS, and that the vote had been one against single-party rule. AL-'ALAM [THE FLAG], the party's mouthpiece, criticized colonialist circles for expressing anxiety over an Islamic party's rise to power. In this regard, it asks why these circles do not become frightened when a Christian party wins in Italy, Germany, or Spain. It stated that the victory in Algeria was democratic, and was more a victory for the Algerian people than a victory for the FIS.

In this context, it is noted that AL-'ALAM published the FIS' full electoral program, which is another indication of the Istiqlal Party's sympathy with the FIS.

The mouthpiece of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces [USFP] sent one of its editors to cover the elections. It published election news and results and reactions to the results on its front page. However, the USFP's newspaper did not carry any commentary on the results, with the exception of pointing out that a delegation from the Moroccan Interior Ministry had followed the elections closely. The newspaper hoped that the ministry would draw inferences from the circumstances of Algeria's elections.

However, the USFP's newspaper also highlighted the positions of political forces opposed to the FIS and their demand for the invalidation of elections.

The Party for Progress and Socialism [PPS] was the only party that took a more unequivocal position. Its general secretary, Ali Yata, cabled Hocine Ait Ahmed to congratulate him on the results obtained by the FFS. The PPS' newspapers stated that the elections reflected the desire of the Algerian people for change and its opposition to single-party rule.

The Moroccan political forces mentioned above continue to follow events in Algeria in anticipation of the second round of elections. Talk and conjecture regarding the fate of the second round are reverberating in Morocco. The prevailing impression is that matters have yet to become clear, and that there might be surprises resulting in a complete reversal of events.

There is a strange incongruence that coincided with the election results. In the context of preparing for the African Cup, the Moroccan team played a friendly match with the Algerian team, which is currently at a training camp in Agadir (southern Morocco), following the announcement of the election results. The Moroccan audience was displeased with the Moroccan team's performance, and it began to cheer the Algerian team. Some commentators deemed Moroccan applause for the Algerians tantamount to praise for the fairness of Algerian elections.

An ingenious conclusion no doubt, but it clearly highlights the commonality of Moroccan and Algerian concerns.

King Holds Talks With Italian Defense Minister

LD3001211692 Rabat MAP in English 1226 GMT
28 Jan 92

[Text] Marrakech—Monday [27 January] afternoon King Hassan II received visiting Italian Defense Minister Virginio Rognoni, who was accompanied by Italian Ambassador to Rabat Giuseppe Panocchia.

The audience was attended by Moroccan Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Abdellatif Filali.

The Italian defense minister and his accompanying delegation later held a meeting with Crown Prince Sidi Mohammed, coordinator of the services and bureaux of the Royal Armed Forces [FAR].

Secretary General of the National Defense Administration General Mohamed Achahbar, commandant of the Royal Gendarmerie General Hosni Benslimane, inspector of the Royal Air Force Colonel-Major Alaoui Mrani, head of the third bureau of the FAR General Staff Colonel-Major Arroub, and Morocco's Ambassador to Italy Zine el Abidine Sebti attended the meeting.

Moroccan-Italian talks highlighted the two sides' commitment and determination to make the Mediterranean an area of stability, peace, and development, the Italian ambassador told MAP.

The Italian diplomat said that the visit King Hassan II had paid to Italy last November gave a new impetus to bilateral cooperation and that there are, in fact, new prospects to upgrade this cooperation.

In defense matters, he said, contacts and meetings are projected between the two countries to enhance the existing cooperation pursuant to the friendship treaty signed last November in Rome.

The two countries, which have identical viewpoints on a number of international issues and have common interests in the region, can greatly contribute to settling the problems in the western Mediterranean region, the Italian diplomat said.

Saturday, [25 January] Morocco and Italy concluded a draft agreement providing for the promotion [of] economic, cultural, and technical cooperation, for the implementing of job-generating projects, and for further political dialogue.

The agreement was concluded at the end of the 5th session of the joint commission held in Morocco January 21-25.

PPS Leader Calls For Special Parliamentary Session

LD3001235792 Rabat MAP in English 1254 GMT 30 Jan 92

[Text] Rabat—The secretary general of the opposition Party for Progress and Socialism [PPS] called for a special session of parliament to amend some of the constitution's provisions regarding communal and legislative elections.

PPS leader Ali Yata, who was holding a rally in Fes at the end of last week, called for a transitional coalition government to rule the country before the holding of the communal and legislative elections.

The PPS secretary general also urged a union of all the nation's forces to take up the serious challenges that the country is going through to defend its territorial integrity, consolidate the democratic process, achieve economic development, and materialize citizens' social rights.

Ali Yata also urged the release of all Moroccan Saharans detained by the Polisario mercenaries in the Tindouf camps and spoke in favor of a large campaign to inform global public opinion about human rights violations in the camps of shame.

Three other opposition parties had asked at a joint statement for the holding of "an extraordinary session of

the Chamber of Deputies to enable the members of parliament to examine and take stands on the draft bills on elections".

The three opposition parties (OADP [Organization for Democratic and Popular Action], USFP [Socialist Union of Popular Forces] and Istiqlal parties) had addressed a letter to the speaker of parliament requesting the holding of a special session. The three parties have also asked that the session remain open at the end of the fall session.

Iranian Visit To Promote Bilateral Ties Discussed

92P40109A Rabat L'OPINION in French 18 Jan 92 p 3

[Text] On Thursday Moroccan and Iranian deputies, after several years of rupture between the two countries, declared themselves ready to promote and broaden bilateral relations, to contribute more to reaffirming Islamic solidarity, and to defend the causes of Islam including that of the Palestinian people.

The support of the Palestinian intifadah, solidarity with Libya in the matter of air attacks, bilateral relations, and the means to develop them were the principal themes that the Iranian parliamentary delegation, currently visiting Morocco, discussed on Thursday morning at the Chamber of Representatives' headquarters in Rabat.

Led by Ahmad Azizi, deputy and president of the Majles [Iranian Parliament] Parliamentary Committee, the delegation arrived in the evening in Morocco and had two meetings. The first meeting was with Mohamed Haddou Echiguer and Mohamed Saad Alami, second and third vice president, respectively, of the Chamber of Representatives. The second meeting was with the president of the Parliamentary Committee of Foreign Affairs, Ahmed Laski, in the presence of representatives of the majority and opposition parliamentary groups.

During the first session of discussions, Haddou Echiguer gave a brief overview to the Iranian deputies of operations and the composition of the Chamber of Representatives, and evoked historical ties that have long united Moroccans and Iranians in spite of, he said, "some misunderstanding and points of disagreement," which have sometimes marked these relations.

In spite of these cloudy periods, however, he said, "We can only be in agreement because we are directly connected by our Islamic religion," which preaches solidarity, cohesion, tolerance, and pardon. Echiguer recalled in this regard the pioneering role that Morocco, in the ports of West Europe and West Africa, and Iran, on both the borders of Asia and the former USSR, played because of their geographic positions, which helped both to propagate the precepts of Islam and to defend its sacred causes.

From this, he added, Morocco and Iran by reason of their history and religion are united on several points of agreement and fraternity, and are called to work in the

framework of Islamic solidarity to develop their relations and broaden them in the interest and mutual respect of the brotherhood of both people.

Haddou Echiquer hoped for the creation of a parliamentary commission of friendship within the Moroccan and Iranian parliaments.

On his behalf, Saad Alami, who had led a parliamentary delegation working on a People's Congress in support of the intifadah of the Palestinian people held at the end of last October in Tehran, welcomed the present visit of the Iranian deputies, whose visit he said will certainly help promote further relations between Morocco and Iran, in general, and their legislative bodies, in particular.

He likewise expressed his satisfaction in the interest and understanding that the Moroccan delegation experienced with Iranian representatives during their stay in Tehran, noting that this new encounter occurred at a time when the international scene was experiencing some profound changes, notably after the collapse of the communist bloc and the disappearance of its ideology.

These changes should prompt the Islamic ummah [nation] to active solidarity, to straightforward and fruitful cooperation, and to increased dialogue in taking on challenges and facing the dangers to which Muslim countries find themselves exposed.

Their spokesman, the head of the Iranian delegation, hoped that the visits would become frequent, since they are intended to fully reinforce the relations between the two countries and to deepen the understanding between brotherhood nations, emphasizing in this regard that Morocco and Iran have a vast area of cooperation that must be broadened if it is to go beyond the realm of the political, economic, and commercial to include the social, religious, and cultural.

After stating that the goal of his present visit to Morocco was to strengthen the Islamic community's support for the Palestinian uprising and the consolidation of relations and cooperation between his country and Morocco, Ahmad Azizi estimated that the void Iranian relations experienced caused great loss to Iran, adding that it was up to both parties from now on to make every effort to make up for lost time.

The Iranian deputy, who had been received beforehand in the company of his delegation by the minister of Islamic affairs, was anxious to point out the similarity of both countries' views regarding important timely questions, including the necessity for increased Islamic solidarity and support of the Palestinian cause which, he said, is a cause for all Muslims.

The head of the Iranian delegation finally expressed satisfaction with the healthy climate between Iran and Morocco as well as other Arab and Muslim countries, especially after the end of the Iraqi-Iranian conflict.

The Iranian delegation, including Rasul Masavi, Deputy Mehdi Sayed Addakrine, head of the organizing committee of the Congress in support of Palestine, and Hojjat ol-Islam Ne'matollah Qadiri, adviser to the minister of foreign affairs responsible for the Near East and North Africa, and the charge d'affaires to the Iranian Embassy in Rabat, later had a long discussion with the president of the Parliamentary Committee of Foreign Affairs and representatives of the majority and opposition parliamentary groups.

Cooperation Accord Signed With Brazil

*LD2801215792 Rabat MAP in English 1247 GMT
28 Jan 92*

[Text] Marrakesh—Morocco and Brazil signed here Monday a report revising the state of bilateral cooperation and drafting the outlines of future action and directions, stressing the need to further involve their private sectors in joint activities.

The report was signed at the end of a meeting co-chaired by Moroccan Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Abdellatif Filali and his Brazilian peer Francisco Rezek.

The report recommends the holding of regular consultations on international issues of mutual interest to positively contribute to the nascent new world order and expand the consultation to the regional groupings to they belong, namely the Arab Maghreb Union [UMA] and the Rio Group.

The two sides decided to update and consolidate the legal framework ruling Moroccan-Brazilian relations to boost and diversify economic, trade, scientific, technical, and cultural relations. They stressed the need to exchange trade missions and organize commercial events to help their export-import corporations, chambers of commerce and industry, and other economic bodies to work out an adequate cooperation framework.

The Joint Cooperation Commission on Scientific, Technical, and Technological Matters and the Joint Trade Commission will convene in July 1992 to consider the problems posed by the implementation of the trade accord and identify appropriate means to improve bilateral trade.

A Moroccan expert mission will make a trip to Brazil to set, along with Brazilian peers, the agenda of the two commissions and draft the provisions of an accord to rule the Grand Joint Commission for Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation.

The conduction of rapid studies are called for to finalize the draft accord on maritime transports, and the conventions on reciprocal guarantee of investments and non-double taxation, and to implement the cultural accord signed in Fez in 1990.

The report also recommends the creation of a joint committee of heads of enterprises and the boosting of

small and medium enterprises, as well as cooperation in the realms of industry, mining, and energy.

Treasury Official on Measures To Reduce Budget Deficit

92AF0292C Rabat L'OPINION in French 8 Jan 92 p 5

[Interview with Treasury Director Mohamed Dairi by Mostafa Nassiri; place and date not given: "The State Reduces Its Borrowing"; first paragraph is L'OPINION introduction]

[Text] Reducing the budget deficit, which will total 1 percent of GDP [gross domestic product] in 1992 and be eliminated in 1993, is a crucial step in freeing the economy of the constraints affecting the allocation of resources. It is also a necessary condition for the convertibility of the dirham, for which the same deadline has been set. The various measures on behalf of the Treasury are putting pressure on the economic equilibriums. That is why the authorities are combining their policy with a series of measures, some of which are intended to reduce the pressure. That is the case with the floor on government securities. That floor will eventually be eliminated, thus making more funds available to the banks and relieving the pressure on interest rates. In the interview below, Treasury Director Mohamed Dairi explains to us all the constraints due to the financing of the budget deficit as well as the measures being taken to eliminate those constraints.

[Nassiri] The objective assigned to budget policy is the reduction of the Treasury deficit. That deficit is being financed with savings, through the financial market, and through indebtedness and the creation of money. Would you explain for us what those operations are and what their importance is?

[Dairi] Significant results have been achieved in reducing the Treasury's deficit, which has fallen from over 13 percent of GDP in the early 1980's to close to 3 percent at present.

That deficit is financed by recourse to the financial market, domestic borrowing, and bank credit.

a) Recourse to the financial market, which is an institutional savings market, takes the form of long-term bonds issued to the CDG [Deposit and Management Fund] and the insurance companies. The Treasury's total debt to that market rose from 4.7 billion dirhams in 1985 to 11.6 billion dirhams in 1990.

b) Domestic borrowing from the public began in 1985 and was aimed at mobilizing domestic savings through the periodic issue of bonds maturing in one, two, three, or five years and paying interest at 11.0, 11.5, 12.0, or 13.0 percent, respectively. The Treasury also issues two-year bonds at an annual rate of 12 percent to Moroccan nationals abroad.

c) Recourse by the Treasury to bank credit.

Bank credit takes the form of:

1. Direct advances (statutory and conventional advances) and indirect advances (discounted customs bills) granted by the Bank of Morocco.
2. The floor on government securities, which consists of a compulsory contribution by the banks to the financing of the Treasury.
3. Treasury bonds auctioned in the monetary market and maturing in from one to 52 weeks.

Bank loans to the Treasury totaled 40.9 billion dirhams in 1990.

[Nassiri] The various methods of financing the Treasury definitely have the effect of ousting other borrowers from the market as well as an effect on liquidity and commercial credit. What about that?

[Dairi] It needs to be pointed out that one of the government's objectives in pursuing its policy of reducing the Treasury deficit, which fell from 13.5 percent of GDP in 1981 to 3.2 percent in 1990, is to reduce the extent to which the Treasury dips into available funds.

As a result, that form of borrowing has been reduced to a minimum and was even negative in 1990: the share of the deficit financed by domestic resources fell from 75 percent in 1987 to -0.6 percent in 1990, and claims on the Treasury as a percentage of counterparts to the money supply dropped substantially from over 50 percent in 1987 to only 42.3 percent in 1990.

All those measures combined will make it possible to free up substantial funds for the rest of the economy.

[Nassiri] Interest rates also feel pressure because of the Treasury's intervention...

[Dairi] Indeed, the Treasury's mobilization of bank funds cannot fail to put pressure on interest rates.

That is why action by the authorities in connection with the financing of the deficit is aimed particularly at the following:

1. The increased mobilization of domestic savings (domestic borrowing and the financial market).
2. A gradual lowering of the floor on government securities with a view to its eventual elimination. The freeing up of funds that will result from that measure and their use at market prices by the banking system should be a factor in reducing the pressure on interest rates.

Regarding the Bank of Morocco, its intervention is aimed at controlling the expansion of credit and, consequently, the increase in the money supply and its impact on inflation.

[Nassiri] Can you assess the impact of the various financing methods on the economic equilibriums?

[Dairi] The Treasury's financing method has an impact on the economic equilibriums particularly through the way in which the available funds are allocated.

That is why, with a view to improving the allocation of funds, we have decided to:

1. Reduce the extent to which the Treasury dips into available funds by reducing the budget deficit.
2. Strengthen the mobilization of savings by guaranteeing lenders a positive rate of return.
3. Gradually eliminate the compulsory investment in government securities by banks, the purpose being to leave room for the unrestricted allocation of bank funds. (To be continued next week.)

Unemployment: Role of Formal, Informal Sectors

92AF0276A Rabat L'OPINION in French
6 Jan 92 pp 1, 3

[Article by Abdelilah Kamal, professor of law in Rabat: "Unemployment and Political Responsibility"—first paragraph is L'OPINION introduction; boldface words as published]

[Text] The imbalance in the job market is a fundamental problem at the economic level and a painful one at the political level. The seriousness of unemployment in Morocco and the public authorities' officially declared intention to make the fight against unemployment one of their priority goals prompt an examination of what has caused the short supply of jobs and what can be done to ease unemployment and transform unused productive potential into a tool for production and growth.

If there is a multidimensional problem worthy of the attention of all it is employment, all the more so because it is a variable closely linked to the pace of economic change in Morocco and to the country's sociocultural characteristics.

However, we will begin our analysis by taking stock of the situation, which will enable us to draw out several traits of the Moroccan job market. We will continue with an examination of a few proposals that may advance our search for a better tomorrow.

I. The Present State of Affairs

A. The Informal Sector's Supremacy and the Predominance of Illegal Activities

The formal sector refers to structured economic activities, i.e., carried out within a legal framework and organized to a relatively high degree. For the most part, it involves companies and merchants who are subject to the business tax. But outside the formal or modern sector, as it is also called, there is the informal sector, a diffuse mass of activities including family jobs, small trades, marginal activities just within the bounds of the law, as well as manufacturing and crafts at the cottage

industry level—garment making, construction, and the production of a wide range of household items and other articles. Several studies of informal sector occupations vary little in their assessment that the informal sector plays a major role, both in the number of individuals it employs and in the economic and social services it offers to society.

On the basis of existing studies, it can be estimated that 25 percent of the working population is employed by the formal sector and 75 percent by the informal sector. The informal sector is a refuge to which various groups—the modern sector's unemployed workers, school drop-outs, newly arrived migrants, and graduates entering the job market for the first time—turn in search of a source of subsistence however meager and precarious it may be. **But, informal jobs fall outside the reach of taxation as well as the protection of the labor laws, a fact that paradoxically accounts for their strength and weakness.**

Their strength lies in lower production costs, which enable the goods they produce to compete with similar products offered by the formal sector. (It is less expensive to hire a loosely knit team of contractors to build one's house than a construction company, just as souks on the outskirts of a city are less expensive than in the central market.)

Their weakness lies in the fact that this type of activity can never develop beyond a limited level to take advantage of a rapidly expanding market, nor achieve economies of scale and productivity gains. It can be noted, however, that several small businesses in the informal sector eventually adopted modern legal and economic structures after reaching a profitable volume of activity.

Nevertheless, the wage and production practices of the informal sector—obliviousness to minimum wage, the absence of social security, work performed without a contract, and so on—are so widespread as to make the labor laws seem an oddity from another era.

But disregard for the labor laws is not confined to the informal sector; even the structured sector at times fails to uphold them. Let's take hiring practices as an example: The Dahir [royal decree] of 7 May 1940 and the Labor Ministry's directive of 3 July 1959 require employers to deal exclusively with placement offices in hiring new workers. In certain exceptional cases, the placement office may be notified after a worker has been hired, but the contract does not become valid unless the placement office gives its approval within seven days. A measure such as this undoubtedly complicates the workings of the job market, but it has the potential of providing a clearer picture of supply and demand on the job market, leading to a more appropriate employment policy. But, what happens in actual practice? According to an Office of Statistics study of job-hunting methods used by the urban unemployed in 1990, only 0.7 percent relied on the placement offices, whereas 79.3 percent

either contacted employers directly or relied on newspaper advertisements and competitive exams, 15.6 percent sought the help of relatives or friends, 2.7 percent the Mokef [translation unknown], and 1.7 percent other methods.

The figures speak for themselves, although it should be pointed out that the job market, like many other markets in Morocco, has two sides to it: a legal side, embodied in the laws and regulations that proudly line the shelves of our libraries and courtrooms; and the day-to-day reality of things, which tends to be chaotic and disconnected from legislative and institutional mechanisms.

It goes without saying that the above-mentioned preferences in job-hunting methods invite abuses of all sorts: favoritism, corruption, and even fraud, such as unscrupulous individuals masquerading as employment agents or employers or selling false passports.

B. Unemployment as a Seriously Disruptive Factor

As everyone knows, if the job market monopolizes the attention of researchers and politicians alike, it is because unemployment has reached alarming levels in terms of absolute numbers and has raised concerns because of the categories it now affects. While the immobilization of a portion of the nation's productive forces is always considered a waste of enormous human potential, unemployment among young graduates is, in addition, a threat to peace, cohesiveness, and stability.

The Office of Statistics estimated unemployment among the urban working population to be 16 percent in 1990. Without going into the statistical gymnastics on which this figure is based (and which have been severely criticized, by the way), we are all convinced that the situation is untenable in the long run, particularly in view of the fact that the social security system does not provide aid or assistance payments to the unemployed. (The cynics would call it a system of social "insecurity.")

Moreover, unemployment now targets some groups more than others, young people and women being the most adversely affected.

1990 Unemployment by Gender and Age Group
(expressed in percentages)

Age Group	Men	Women	Total
15 to 24	30.9	31.6	31.1
25 to 34	16.3	21.3	17.7
35 and older	4.5	7.8	5.6
Total	14.2	20.4	15.8

Source: Office of Statistics

However, the uneven impact of unemployment is explained by the consistently large numbers of young people arriving on the job market at a time when the pool of available jobs is declining and companies are becoming more selective, requiring several years of experience. It is also explained by sociocultural traits that exclude women from a very large number of positions. But these traits are more or less understandable and can even be found in developed countries.

Logic breaks down, however, when, in analyzing the rate of unemployment as a function of education, we find that unemployment rises with the level of education. This is particularly true of the young population, as shown in the 1990 data from the Office of Statistics on unemployment among 15 to 25 year olds in the cities:

- Post-secondary graduates: 63 percent
- Secondary school graduates: 46.8 percent
- Primary school graduates: 25.2 percent
- No diplomas: 13.7 percent

In other words, we would be right to advise our children not to pursue their studies or training because it would only increase their risks of remaining unemployed!! This state of affairs is all the more startling in that the qualifications of Morocco's working population in general have not progressed beyond a very low level: It is

estimated that 67 percent of the urban working population can claim no diploma at all; for the rural working population the figure is 92.5 percent. Even if the relativity of statistics is taken into account, the general trends are alarming.

At this stage of the analysis, one question can no longer be ignored: What are the causes of unemployment? The statisticians limit themselves to identifying the immediate reasons for an individual's unemployment at a given moment (whether he has been laid off, is entering the job market for the first time, has reached the end of a contract, or some other reason). We will approach the question from a different angle and attempt to determine the causes of the imbalance in the job market at the macro-economic level, or why the production system is unable to make use of all available workers.

Or, why does the demand for jobs generally exceed the number of jobs available?

Before answering these questions, we need to address the problem of how job offers and job searches can co-exist and yet go unfulfilled. In our opinion, there is no contradiction in this because the two terms of the equation do not have the same meaning. If a job offer goes unfulfilled, it is simply because of the delay between the time of the employer's announcement of an opening

and the hiring of a job applicant—a matter of a few days or one or two months. An unfulfilled job search, on the other hand, is indicative of a structural problem, and job seekers may have to wait years before finding employment.

At this juncture, there are two questions: Why is there an excessive demand for jobs? Why are jobs in short supply?

In answer to the first question, we must consider the factors that affect the size of the working population.

The first is the demographic factor. Without turning it into a scapegoat for all evils, we must be aware of the fact that an excessive rate of demographic growth over too long a period of time will eventually bring massive numbers of young people onto the job market. If they begin looking for work at an unfavorable juncture in the growth cycle, imbalance is inevitable. Consequently, any long-term employment policy must contemplate the means of slowing population growth.

The demand for employment is also affected by socio-cultural factors. In the present case, the factor at work is the growing number of women who are seeking work. The breakdown of barriers to women, combined with hard economic times, spurred many women to look for salaried positions. In the same way, the rural exodus adds to unemployment in the cities. Other factors may also influence the size of the working population: the average duration of schooling, retirement age, and other factors.

But it must be stressed that a rapid increase in the size of the work force does not present a problem until the job supply shrinks to insufficient levels.

What, then, explains the inadequacy of the number of jobs available?

When employers are asked what prevents them from hiring more workers, their unanimous reply is weak demand: the small size of the domestic market, protectionism in some foreign markets, stiff competition in other markets, etc. Their explanation is borne out by the fact that production capacity continues to be severely underutilized.

For example, in the industrial and public-works sectors, it is estimated that facilities are being used at only 65 percent of capacity.

Simple arithmetic enables us to estimate that more than 400,000 jobs lie dormant because of the slow pace of operations that is, in turn, due to inadequate demand and problems associated with the economic recession in general. The teams that conducted the survey for CNJA [National Council on Youth and the Future] found that some employers responded with a laugh, explaining that they were willing to hire all of Morocco's unemployed as salesmen or distributors, giving them a percentage of sales. The only problem lay in drumming up enough clients, potential buyers, demand.

It is true that other factors may intervene to curtail the ability of companies to create jobs. One of them is technical progress (high capital investments, in the jargon of economists), although it is needed to enhance productivity and competitiveness. Another is inadequate financing and its high cost. But, all these factors stem from the same roots, which are inadequate purchasing power and weak demand. The problem is that there is no magic wand or administrative decision capable of increasing demand, which is the product of several factors, the most important of them being an increase in labor productivity and the structure of income distribution.

Nine-Month Figures on Oil Consumption

92AF0285B Rabat L'OPINION in French
9 Jan 92 pp 1, 2

[Unattributed Article: "National Oil Market: Consumption Slows Down"—first two paragraphs are L'OPINION introduction]

[Text] The consumption of oil products is an economic indicator of the development level of a country.

With a 1.6-percent increase of its domestic consumption (low consumption), Morocco remains an under-industrialized country with a small energy consumption.

On Monday, the National Petroleum Products Company (SNPP) held a meeting of its board of directors, chaired by Mr. Driss Alaoui Mdaghri, minister of energy and mines.

The board first examined the growth of the domestic oil-product market during the first three quarters of 1991, when sales reached 4,988,000 tons, i.e., a 1.6-percent increase in domestic consumption.

This is less than the 4.7-percent increase recorded in September 1990, mostly because of the Gulf war.

The most significant sales increases were recorded for diesel fuel (+4.9 percent) and butane (+9.6 percent), and the most significant decreases were for aviation jet fuel (-30.9 percent) and ordinary gasoline (-3.9 percent).

The SNPP group sold nearly three-fourths of the oil products consumed in the country.

In addition, until the end of September 1991, 87 percent of the requirements for refined oil products were met by local refineries; imports involved mostly butane and propane.

For the end of 1991, the growth rate remained below 2 percent, a marked difference with 1990 (+4.3 percent).

The board then considered the SNPP operating and investment budgets, and projections for the period 1992-96.

The SNPP thus set its goal at 259 million dirhams for 1992, i.e., a 12.6-percent increase over 1991.

As far as the five-year projections for the period 1992-96 are concerned, the group's consolidated investments will amount to 1,310 million dirhams and will focus on three major goals: modernizing the service-station network, meeting the demand for gas, and regionalizing distribution activities, in particular oil and gas logistics.

Concerning the status of the Maghreb-Europe gas pipeline, the board of directors noted with satisfaction the progress achieved by this major project and expressed its full support to the prompt completion of subsequent stages of the project, to ensure that it is completed on schedule, i.e., during the last quarter of 1995.

Media on Importance of Al-Quds Committee

LD2401094192 Rabat MAP in English 1354 GMT
23 Jan 92

[Text] Rabat—The Moroccan media of all trends devoted editorials and large comments to the 14th session of al-Quds [Jerusalem] committee, to open works this Thursday afternoon in Marrakech.

The Moroccan media underlined the importance of the "diplomatic forum" that is taking place in a special juncture. Opposition "AL BAYANE" daily [Party of Progress and Socialism] expressed hope that the Marrakech meeting, on the fringes of which an Arab-Arab meeting might be held, would renew and consolidate the Islamic nation's solidarity with the cause of Palestine and al-Quds and at the same time push forward an inter-Arab consensus.

"L'OPINION" [Istiqlal Party], on its part, stressed the timeliness of the Marrakech meeting and denounced the Israeli intransigence and blatant attempts to foil the peace process. The carrying on of the settlements policy, expelling of Palestinians from their homeland, refusal to withdraw from occupied Arab territories and other exactions are all evidence that Israel is not keen on establishing peace in the region.

Another Moroccan daily, "LE MATIN DU SAHARA ET DU MAGHREB", dwelt on the universal character of the city of al-Quds and pointed out that the issue of occupied Arab territories should not overshadow the issue of al-Quds, spiritual heritage of one billion Muslims and capital of Arab Palestine.

The al-Quds committee was set up in 1975. It is formed of Bangladesh, Guinea, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco (chairman), Niger, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, and Syria.

Seriousness of Hospital Conditions Discussed

92AF0292A Rabat L'OPINION in French
12 Jan 92 pp 1, 3

[Article by Abdellah Benzouina: "Medical Profession Calls For Help"]

[Text] The public health sector is becoming an unavoidable subject not only because of the extreme poverty of

all the hospitals in the Marrakech Governorate but also because a longstanding dispute is continuing to divide the medical profession in the surgical departments.

The Public Health Department is being seriously affected by that illness, which the supervising ministry is trying to heal by the use of simple tranquilizers.

We have been told more than once that no one dares burst the abscess to disinfect it because everyone—except the patients, of course—is benefiting from it.

One is tempted at first to minimize the conflict existing between a chief physician and his surgeon colleagues, but the remarks we heard on the spot quickly made us bow to the evidence concerning the seriousness of the problem.

Right away, the person I was talking to exclaimed: "There is no longer any public health; it's more like public rubbish [a play on words]." And he added: "Frankly, the unhealthy atmosphere that prevails in the surgical departments because of mutual incompatibility between the chief physician and the personnel is poisoning working conditions and sometimes bringing things to a complete standstill." "It's intolerable," we were told by one of them, who is convinced that cohabitation with the official in question, who does exactly as he pleases, is almost impossible.

The person we were interviewing knows what he is talking about, and judging from what he says, one can only hope for a miracle to restore the hospital's operations to normal. One can therefore understand the dissatisfaction felt by the medical personnel, who are fulminating with rage and waiting for the top authorities to condescend to solve this problem for good.

In another connection, our curiosity was also attracted by another situation that is even more alarming: the condition imposed for being admitted to the hospital as a paying patient is no longer a secret from anyone, and professional ethics are also absent from the emergency room, where we witnessed a distressing sight: a young intern abandoned patients in coma to go "kid around" with some buddies who had come to talk to him in the yard.

For their part, the medical personnel have grown weary and [text missing] examples of shortcomings, which show how far the spirit that motivates that noble office has been perverted.

One must see the deplorable conditions in which patients are housed and fed to realize the extent to which those facilities have deteriorated.

One is forced to note the lack of public spiritedness and humane feeling among certain administration and management officials who are not ashamed to serve an unwholesome and unbalanced diet. And it is not the medical profession that should have to be educated in

morality or taught sanitary and food hygiene. Our witness said it was a scandal as he told us how, after visiting hours are over, certain staff members have gotten into the habit of squabbling over the possession of food bought by relatives of patients.

Even more scandalous is the fact that the massacre of public health is taking place in full view of local officials who are theoretically responsible for the public's health.

In conclusion, we add our voice to that of the medical profession, which is calling for someone to come to the aid of a sickly public health sector. In other words, we dare to hope that the appropriate authorities will step in to put an end to a situation that honors neither the medical profession nor the medical calling and whose main victims are the patients.

'Deplorable' Conditions of Rural Hospitals Noted

92AF0292B Rabat L'OPINION in French 13 Jan 92 p 3

[Article by K.M.: "Health District for 230,000 Inhabitants"]

[Text] The crossroads city of Sidi Slimane is located 60 km from Kenitra, 20 km from Sidi Kacem, 60 km from Khemisset, and 50 km from Souk Larbaa.

Its population is approximately as follows:

- Urban: 100,000 inhabitants
- Rural: 130,000 inhabitants
- Total: 230,000 inhabitants

As far as their medical needs are concerned, those inhabitants are served by a single health district dating back to the time of the protectorate and known as the Rural Hospital. The district includes a hospital whose 24 beds are generally used for medical observation, but it is stated that the Rural Hospital currently serves as a well-structured hospital, which is not the case. Patients undergo prolonged hospitalization because it is realized that there is no way to follow up on a patient or to make a scientific diagnosis.

Besides those 24 beds, there is also a maternity clinic 3 km from the Rural Hospital at the urban dispensary in Ouled El Ghazi. When on duty, health professionals find it very difficult to get there to examine a patient when needed.

The city of Sidi Slimane has a second urban medical clinic in the Loghmaryene neighborhood. That clinic is in deplorable condition, and several letters have been written concerning its upkeep and modernization. Its condition is known to everyone, including local health authorities and elected officials.

It would be desirable for the departments concerned to look into this situation, which is unworthy of a public establishment.

The rural population is served by five units, only one of which—Dar Bel Amri—has a medical staff. Their condition is also deplorable—one gets the impression that there is no provincial maintenance department.

It is no secret from anyone that the population of Gharb in general is increasing at a rapid rate.

In the Sidi Slimane Health District, the number of newborns recorded annually is on the order of 7,000.

As regards emergency care, the district has two ambulances in defective condition, and God only knows the difficulties faced by the doctors when it is urgently necessary to take a patient to the hospital in Kenitra or Rabat. This state of affairs is also no secret from anyone, and it is time that officials remedied it.

In view of that degrading situation, it is imperative that officials in all the departments concerned turn their attention to the construction of an area hospital with a capacity of 240 beds and offering the minimum level of special services, as follows:

- A surgical department
- A pediatric department
- A gynecological-obstetrical department
- A medical department
- A lab and a radiology department.

Along with that, the preventive health infrastructure that should long ago have met current standards for the technical departments must also be provided.

SUDAN

Sahlul Defends Foreign Relations

PM2901140792 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI
in Arabic 27 Jan 92 p 4

[Interview with Sudanese Foreign Minister 'Ali Sahlul by Mahmud Ma'ruf in Marrakech; date not given]

[Excerpts] [Ma'ruf] You are threatened with inclusion on the list of states that support terrorism?!

[Sahlul] These threats are part of the accusations which hostile forces persist in leveling at Sudan. Their aim is to pressure Sudan with a comprehensive moral, political, and economic siege. Their intensification of these threats and accusations cause many states, even from among those which have no connection with what is happening in our region, to include Sudan on a special list that is bound to negatively affect their relations with Sudan. This has happened with several European states; however, such accusations are soon exposed, as in the case of some states which once responded to a kind of fabricated information distributed here and there, but later discovered that they had been deceived and reexamined the reliability of the sources that circulate such rumors, including what is reported about terrorism, camps, and training.

[Ma'ruf] But it is said that there are documents?

[Sahlul] It is easy to talk about documents or even fabricate documents. I challenge anyone who talks about such documents to produce them.

[Ma'ruf] Are [National Islamic Front leader] Dr. Hasan al-Turabi's links with the fundamentalists the cause of these accusations?

[Sahlul] Dr. Hasan al-Turabi is a thinker and a political leader, and Dr. al-Turabi's activities have nothing to do with the country's government. He is secretary general of the People's Arab Islamic Conference, which includes all Arab and Islamic forces that reject surrendering to what some people want to impose on us. I do not believe that we Arabs are required to tie our hands and accept what is imposed on us within the framework of a new world system or scheme or a false peace for the region. Besides, linking the Sudanese Government and the Islamic Arab popular tide is a big mistake, because the Sudanese Government's concern is to surmount the problems and difficulties facing the country, not to work to export the concepts of revolution to other states.

Our prime concern is the country's security and then tackling the economic situation, and at present we have no interests outside Sudan's borders. [passage omitted]

[Ma'ruf] Your relations with the Gulf states are still bad.

[Sahlul] They are bad because of these states, not because of us. We are not a Gulf state, and the Gulf's problems concern its states, with which we have nothing to do. What happened in the Gulf has happened, and we adopted stances as a result of convictions, circumstances, and interests. We are not forced to subject our interests and problems to other people's calculations and problems. All its states are responsible for their interests and positions. We have no hostility toward the Gulf, and if there are unfriendly links, that is not attributable to us.

[Ma'ruf] Was not possible to avoid what happened with the [United Arab] Emirates?

[Sahlul] Of course, it was possible to avoid it. What happened has become part of history, but if the brothers in the UAE want to open a new page, we are ready.

[Ma'ruf] What stage has been reached in your offices between Iraq and Iran?

[Sahlul] They are designed to turn the page of dispute between the two Muslim countries. The question can be tackled, but it requires more efforts and patience. We are doing our utmost and there are also others who are exerting their efforts, and we hope to achieve our objective. This is because the two countries are facing the same threats, and it is in our interests that there be reconciliation, cooperation, and solidarity between the states facing the dangers and threats which we are facing. [passage omitted]

[Ma'ruf] Is it true that your relations with Libya are lukewarm now?

[Sahlul] I heard such talk, which is untrue. The rumors are based on the lie that we provide aid to the fundamentalists, and this is untrue for two reasons: Because Sudan has not provided aid to Libyan or non-Libyan fundamentalists, and because I do not think that there are fundamentalist in Libya on the scale that would threaten or worry the Libyan leadership. [passage omitted]

[Ma'ruf] How would you assess your relations with the United States?

[Sahlul] They are now better than they were a year ago. A number of U.S. officials are convinced that it is possible to establish normal relations between the U.S. and Sudanese Governments.

[Ma'ruf] Why has an invitation not been sent to you to attend the multilateral negotiations in Moscow?

[Sahlul] We do not want to attend.

TUNISIA

Ben Ali on International Issues

*LD1901113192 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio
Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 16 Jan 92*

[Speech by President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali to members of the Diplomatic Corps accredited to Tunisia, on 16 January—recorded]

[Excerpts] In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful; Mr. Dean of the Diplomatic Corps; Your Excellencies; It gives me pleasure at the beginning of this New Year to receive you to exchange with you greetings and best wishes and to ask you to convey to the leaders of your states and to your fraternal and friendly peoples our best wishes for a New Year full of good achievements along the path of progress and prosperity and in peace and security.

[passage omitted saying man wants good and rejects evil, and expressing optimism about the future, and hope that the values of tolerance, cooperation, and solidarity will prevail in the world to build a society based on justice, equality, and security for all peoples.]

The international community is today living through a very critical phase as a result of the far-reaching transformations and changes whose effects and reflections have reached all parts of the world. Tunisia of 7 November, loyal to its civilized values and which is working to perpetuate its fundamental choices, has positively interacted with the developments which were witnessed last year by the international arena. It spared no effort in establishing harmony, fraternity, and cooperation among nations so that it remains loyal to its role and policy, calling for dialogue and peace. Therefore our

country has participated in upholding the just causes, primarily the causes of liberation and freedom. [passage omitted saying Tunisia contributed toward the establishment of a new world order that ensures peace and security for all on the basis of international legitimacy, justice, and equality]. We are determined to continue our endeavor and cooperation with the peace-loving states to build the human society we aspire for and which enjoys security, stability, and prosperity, and in which the values of freedom, democracy, and human rights are firm.

Mr. Dean of the Diplomatic Corps; Your Excellencies; Whereas the Arab Maghreb is our natural [word indistinct] vis-a-vis the blocs that have emerged on the international arena, we have worked and are still working with our brothers the leaders of the Maghreban states to build the Arab Maghreb Union [AMU] and bolster its structures so that we can realise our peoples' aspirations for cooperation and integration and guarantee the defense of their interests against various challenges. [words indistinct] to cooperate with our brothers to consolidate the AMU's relations with all groups, including the group of states bordering the western basin of the Mediterranean, hoping that the dialogue between the two groups will open new prospects for a more comprehensive cooperation between the AMU and the European Economic Community within the framework of distinguished strategic relations that serve the interests of all and act as an entrance leading to the resumption of the Arab-European dialogue. We are most concerned to enable our region to avoid the dangers of all kinds of confrontation so that our peoples' efforts can be devoted to construction, development, and progress, hence we are still working to avoid conflicts and settle problems that may arise from these conflicts on the basis of international legitimacy and in accordance with the principles of dialogue, negotiations, good neighborliness, and noninterference in the internal affairs of other states.

Within this framework fall our efforts to arrive at a solution of the dispute between the [Libyan] Jamahiriyah and a number of western states in a peaceful manner that guarantees security and peace for the region. Within the same context, and while renewing our total solidarity with the fraternal Algerian people and the fact that we stand by it in these circumstances in which it is passing and as we have always done [in the past], we would like to express our total confidence in its ability to overcome these circumstances sound and impregnable due to its wisdom, farsightedness, and capability to overcome hardships. [passage omitted stating further praise for the Algerian people, who need no advice from others as they know their history and people]

Mr. Dean of the Diplomatic Corps; Your Excellencies; out of our conviction that the Arab Maghreb is a brick in the edifice of the Arab nation, we have continuously worked for the bolstering of the joint Arab action and endeavored during the past year to make available the suitable ground for the restoration of cohesion among the Arab brothers by way of continuity, dialogue, and

consultation between the Arab states in an attempt to establish strong relations between them based on mutual confidence and respect, and constructive fraternal cooperation in the service of our fateful issues. While expressing our satisfaction with the positive developments which were witnessed by Arab relations in the last months of last year we have hope that the New Year will be a year of concord, amity, and effective solidarity between the Arab states in a manner that will realize the aspirations of our peoples for dignity, impregnability, progress and prosperity.

Mr. Dean of the Diplomatic Corps; Your Excellencies; Tunisia has supported and still supports the issue of the struggling Palestinian people out of its belief in the justice of this issue and in the necessity of settling it in accordance with international legitimacy—a comprehensive and permanent settlement that safeguards the rights of all and remove the injustice which the Palestinian people have been suffering for more than four decades. Proceeding from our permanent attachment to peace and out of our respect for international legitimacy we attended, together with our Palestinian brothers within the framework of the AMU [Arab Maghreb Union], the peace conference in Madrid. We will always be by their side in everything that serves the Palestinian cause and the cause of peace hoping that the two states co-sponsoring the conference and the international community appreciate the readiness shown by the Palestinian side to reach understanding and take the measures necessary for compelling Israel to refrain from the policy of expansion and the building of settlements and to stop the persecution and terrorism and the violation of sanctities and the deportation of Palestinian citizens from their land. We believe that the Palestinian people is not less worthy or deserving than other peoples of the world to regain its rights and build its state, or not to benefit from the change and relaxation which began to prevail in the world. [passage omitted saying the historic transformations in Africa give rise to hope].

Mr. Dean, Your Excellencies; Tunisia has always ensured to expand the circle of its cooperation and explore new horizons in its relations with friendly Asian states and Latin American states. It will always work for developing and strengthening these relations within the framework of its basic choices embodied in cooperation on the basis of mutual interests and entrenching democracy and promoting human rights.

Mr. Dean, Your Excellencies; the changes that had been witnessed by Eastern Europe and the depth and comprehensiveness of the changes that followed in the international arena make our present world without fail feel solidarity with the interaction of events directly and effectively. Therefore, the international community has more than ever before become interested in the establishment of security and peace in the world and in persisting in the search for earnest solutions to bridge the gap between nations in the economic and social fields, and tackling the debts problem and the various development problems and devising new ways for cooperation

and solidarity in a way that ensures the establishment of firm foundations for the new world order whose basis is justice, equality, security, stability and development for all nations. There is no doubt that you and your colleagues have played a great part in realizing these objectives.

Mr. Dean and Your Excellencies; with the beginning of the new year we are optimistic about the future. We pray to God the almighty to follow the path of good, wisdom and right so that we may succeed in solving the current issues in the shadow of right, justice and peace.

It gives me pleasure on this occasion, to thank you for your continuous efforts for strengthening relations between Tunisia and your countries, and I would like to emphasize my personal interest in facilitating the conditions of your work and stay among us for the sake of strengthening our fraternal and friendly ties. I renew my good wishes for your continuing good health and success and more progress and prosperity for your fraternal and friendly peoples. Peace and the blessing of God be upon you.

President Reiterates Support for Religious Affairs

LD2001181192 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 20 Jan 92

[Excerpt] As an encouragement to the researchers and students of Islamic studies, President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali has decided to create a President of the Republic Prize for Islamic Studies to be awarded annually to the best research work in this field.

This was decided during the meeting President Ben Ali had at noon today with Ali Chebbi, the secretary of state attached to the prime minister in charge of religious affairs.

The president reiterated his support for religious affairs and those involved in religious matters with a view to the further reinforcement of Islamic values and principles and the grounding of Tunisia in its Islamic climate as one of the constant aspects of Tunisia's development policy. [passage omitted: Ben Ali's care for pilgrims comfort]

Al-Faysal Receives Tunisian Foreign Minister

LD1201091292 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1100 GMT 11 Jan 92

[Excerpt] Riyadh, 11 January (SPA)—His Royal Highness Amir Sa'ud al-Faysal, the Saudi foreign minister, received His Excellency the foreign minister of Tunisia, Habib Benyahya, at the Foreign Ministry at noon today. The meeting was attended by Isma'il Al-Shuri, assistant foreign under secretary for political affairs, the director of the Arab department at the ministry, 'Isam N'uman, and the Tunisian ambassador to the Kingdom, Kacem Bousnina. The Tunisian Foreign Minister arrived in Riyadh before noon today. [passage omitted]

Shaykh Zayid Receives Tunisian Foreign Minister, Letter

JN1401191792 Manama WAKH in English 1627 GMT 14 Jan 92

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Jan 14 (GNA)—UAE [United Arab Emirates] President H.H. [His Highness] Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan received a letter from Tunisian President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali connected with bilateral relations and the latest Arab developments.

The letter was conveyed by Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya during a meeting with Shaykh Zayid today.

Brazilian Foreign Minister Visit Promotes Trade Ties

LD2801212292 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 28 Jan 92

[Text] Brazilian Foreign Minister Francisco Rezek begins an official visit to Tunisia today at the invitation of Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahya. The visit will last three days.

Tunisian-Brazilian relations have been active since the opening of a Tunisian embassy in Brasilia in 1989, which was the beginning of Tunisia's diplomatic presence in the Latin American continent. In November 1990, on the occasion of Tunisian foreign minister's visit to Brasilia, Tunisia and Brazil signed a general framework cooperation accord providing for the setting up of a Tunisian-Brazilian Joint Committee. They also signed a trade agreement aiming at a substantial increase in the volume of exchanges between the two countries.

Brazil represents one of our country's most important trade partners in Latin America. Contacts are continuing between businessmen in the two countries, especially in the fields of phosphates and fertilizers, Tunisia's exports of which to Brazil have witnessed a fast growth.

A delegation of Brazilian businessmen has been in Tunisia since the day before yesterday to study the Tunisian market and opportunities for establishing relations of trade and economic partnership between the two countries.

Agriculture Minister Hails Saudi Funding, Development Role

LD1801161192 Riyadh SPA in English 1253 GMT 18 Jan 92

[Text] Tunis, Jan 18, SPA—Tunisian Agriculture Minister Mouldi Zouaoui has noted the great role played by the Kingdom to support the agricultural sector in Tunisia. "The Kingdom is contributing through the Saudi Development Fund to several agricultural projects in Tunisia, particularly in the field of water and irrigation," he said in an interview with the Jeddah-based IQRAA magazine. "This contribution has played an effective role in the development of agriculture and

increasing of productivity,' he added. He pointed out that the Saudi Development Fund has financed several projects including Sidi Sa'ad, al-Hawarib and al-Sa'ud dams in Zaroud, Maraqlail and Sanjan Valleys respectively. He noted in particular the importance of the first two dams which he said will protect the historically important Islamic city of al-Qairuwan from floods. He said the three dams are economically important, adding that they have helped in expansion of irrigated areas and introduction of sophisticated agricultural systems that led to an increase in productivity and improvement in the status of farmers. He said the Saudi Development Fund has contributed to the Nafzawah oasis reclamation project south of Tunisia by constructing irrigation canals for about 4,300 hectares and discovering six new oasis covering an area of 500 hectares. Highlighting the joint cooperation between the Kingdom and his country, Zouaoui said the Saudi-Tunisian development investment company is currently involved in several investment projects carried out within the framework of a new agricultural development policy adapted by the government. He said Tunisia is trying its best to strengthen its cooperation with the Kingdom in investment projects and the exchange of expertise in various agricultural fields. Zouaoui commended the Kingdom's agricultural progress, particularly in the field of wheat production.

Police Said To Seize 'Secret Fundamentalist Organization'

*PM2801142992 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic
25 Jan 92 p 1*

[Unattributed report: "Tunisia: Secret Fundamentalist Organization Seized"]

[Text] Tunis, AL-HAYAH—Tunisian national police forces last week arrested in the town of Duz (400 km south of the capital, Tunis) members of a fundamentalist organization calling itself the "Unionist Islamic Alliance".

Informed sources told AL-HAYAH yesterday that the police arrested the secret organization's leader, who uses Italy as a center for his activities, upon his arrival in Duz on a partisan mission.

The sources did not reveal the person's name, but said that he is in his thirties and has been working in Italy for nine years. They said that leaflets, documents, and posters, in addition to the organization's founding documents, had been found at the house of his Tunisian wife.

It is known that last summer the police seized another fundamentalist organization called the "Islamic Liberation Party" and arrested members of its leadership who were holding a secret meeting in the Sukrah district north of the capital, Tunis.

Seven Tunisians Captured During Iran-Iraq War Freed

*LD2101093792 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT
20 Jan 92*

[Text] Seven Tunisian citizens, taken captive during the imposed war, were released and handed over to the Tunisian ambassador to Tehran this morning, within the framework of the Islamic Republic of Iran's humanitarian actions. The Tunisian ambassador to Tehran expressed his joy over this gesture by the Islamic Republic of Iran during an interview with our correspondent, and he expressed hope for the further expansion of ties between the two countries in all fields.

WESTERN SAHARA

UN Criticized for 'Silence, Passivity'

92AF0291A Rabat L'OPINION in French 8 Jan 92 p 1

[Editorial by Mohamed Idrissi Kaitouni: "United Nations Must Accept its Responsibilities"]

[Text] Can MINURSO [UN Mission for the Organization of a Referendum in Western Sahara] continue to stand idly by while Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro] gangs set themselves up in localities in Moroccan Sahara that are beyond the defensive wall built by the FAR [Royal Armed Forces]?

Can it tolerate the settlement there of those outlaws, who have taken advantage of the deployment of UN observers in the region and used the latter's presence as a cover for returning to areas from which they were expelled by the FAR?

The cease-fire decreed by the United Nations on 6 September cannot be exploited by Polisario to gain a foothold in the no-man's-land and then claim that it is "liberated territory," especially in view of the fact that when the cease-fire was officially declared, the territory turned over to the United Nations beyond the defensive wall was empty and contained no dwellings or buildings because the few permanent structures hastily put up by Polisario had all been completely destroyed, as is proven by press reports.

Polisario's presence today in such localities as Tifariti and Bir Lahlou is a clear violation of the cease-fire and a threat to the process initiated by the United Nations because it constitutes an unacceptable and serious change in the facts of the situation in the field and one likely to influence the progress of the operations called for in the UN plan.

The no-man's-land must remain empty, as it was on the eve of the declaration of the cease-fire, and the United Nations must act to put an end to the accomplished fact

with which Polisario has presented it. It is a question of UN credibility and of the genuineness of the entire referendum process.

The United Nations, whose basic mission is to work for the preservation of international peace and security and which, consequently, acts to eliminate hot spots and settle disagreements between member states in a peaceful manner, must not contribute, by its silence and passivity, to the creation of situations harmful to peace.

The United Nations must fully accept its responsibilities and restore the situation in the field that existed before 6 September, and it must do so by ensuring the withdrawal of the intruders who settled in the no-man's-land during the deployment of UN observers.

Morocco, which exercises its complete sovereignty over the entire territory of Moroccan Sahara within its internationally recognized borders—including the zone located beyond the defensive wall—cannot allow the mercenaries to establish themselves there under cover of the presence of MINURSO.

The United Nations must evacuate the separatists and prevent any change in the situation in the no-man's-land and any violation of the principles of international law. The presence of mercenaries in the localities of Bir Lahlou and Tifariti constitutes not only a violation and interruption of the cease-fire but also blatant aggression justifying the use by Morocco of every means at its disposal for defending itself, erasing the aftereffects of that aggression, and protecting its territory.

The United Nations must therefore accept its responsibilities and prevent the separatists from continuing their policy of defiance and provocation for the purpose of torpedoing the referendum, which they know full well will not be favorable to them.

Internal Reorganization Urged Despite Saharan Question

92AF0285C Rabat L'OPINION in French
12 Jan 92 pp 1, 3

[Unattributed article: "El Aaiun: 14th Session of the Istiqlal Party Central Committee"—first paragraph is L'OPINION introduction]

[Text] Maitre M'hamed Boucetta: "We are telling the United Nations and those who live in Lahmada and in Algeria that the Sahara is an integral part of Morocco. The Saharan question cannot indefinitely prevent the country's internal reorganization...."

Yesterday, Saturday 11 January 1992, was a memorable day for the town of El Aaiun and the people of this militant town lived historical moments.

Two major political events marked the day, namely the 14th meeting of the Istiqlal Party Central Committee, attended by members of the Executive Committee headed by the general secretary, Maitre Boucetta; and

the large popular rally organized by the PI [Istiqlal Party], the USFP [Socialist Union of Popular Forces], and the OADP [Organization of Democratic and Popular Action] to commemorate the 48th anniversary of the presentation of the Independence Manifesto.

These two events highlighted an essential fact, namely that our people are determined to meet the challenges and win the bet of consolidating national unity and defending our territorial integrity.

The organization of these two events under the present circumstances, and precisely in El Aaiun, confirmed that national parties are intent on establishing a close link between yesterday's and today's struggle, with a view to continuing the struggle to preserve our people's achievements, achieve territorial reunification, and institute genuine democracy to guarantee progress and prosperity.

The 14th meeting of the Istiqlal Party Central Committee was devoted as a whole to the debate on the issue of territorial integrity, and it provided several answers in this respect. It also raised other fundamental issues concerning democracy and the current concerns of national public opinion.

The meeting was marked by the important speech of the Party general secretary, Mr. M'hamed Boucetta, in which he reviewed the main issues that are a cause for concern, i.e., the Sahara, Sebta and Mellilia, the forthcoming elections, and the struggle for genuine democracy with respect for human rights and public and individual liberties.

After reading the Fatiha for the rest of the souls of the militant nationalists who died recently, viz. Mohamed Ben Abdessadek, Haj Mohamed Boutaleb, Mohamed Adbib, Mohamed El Fassi, and Abderrahim Bouabid, the general secretary of the party first indicated that the choice of El Aaiun to hold the 14th meeting of the Central Committee was due to the latest developments in the Moroccan Sahara question and to the presence of the UN mission on location.

He added that the meeting was held on 11 January, a date taken to mark the real start of the country's liberation. This was a deliberate choice designed to enable the Party to confirm, from the town of El Aaiun, its unwavering position on our territorial integrity. "We are telling the United Nations and those who reside in Lahmada that these provinces can only be an integral part of Morocco," Maitre Boucetta indicated, adding that it is now only a matter of time before the question is definitively settled.

Concerning the latest developments in this respect, Maitre Boucetta indicated that they all confirmed a single truth, i.e., that the referendum has become useless and is no longer warranted. He [described] these developments in the context of the urban development achieved in the South provinces, the grandiose work of the Royal Armed Forces who guaranteed the security and stability of the sons of our people in these regions,

the perseverance of the inhabitants of the region who stood up against deceptive campaigns, the attachment of these people to their Moroccan heritage, renewed allegiance followed by the signature of the treaty on the UMA [Arab Maghreb Union], which Algeria used to say could not be achieved "without the Sahraoui people." The Arab Maghreb Union, he said, was achieved on the basis of five countries, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and Mauritania. Better still, one article in the treaty emphasizes the principle of the nonutilization of a member state's territory as a base for aggression against another State.

Maitre Boucetta also mentioned the profound changes that have taken place in many African countries, who revised their position toward our national cause, and the collapse of the separatists after the return of our brothers, who demonstrated courage in order to show public opinion that our enemies' claim is totally unfounded.

In spite of all these truths, Maitre Boucetta insisted on the need to remain mobilized so as to foil any attempts of our enemies against the Moroccan people.

After paying homage to the citizens originating from the Sahara, who returned to their regions of origin to take part in the confirmation referendum, Maitre Boucetta indicated that the UN plan contains several faults, even violations of the UN charter and of the spirit of the UN plan itself. We cannot accept that sons of this region, who were forced to flee colonialism, should be deprived of their right to participate in the referendum.

In this connection, the Istiqlal Party general secretary mentioned infiltrations of mercenaries into the Moroccan Sahara, in particular in Tifariti and Bir Lahlou. He pinned the blame on the United Nations and the Moroccan Government.

Maitre Boucetta also mentioned the political, economic, and social situation, stating that the Sahara issue should not prevent "putting the house in order." After this year, he said, there should be no more deaths, it must be the year of the establishment of representative institutions; in this respect, he recalled the speech made by His Majesty the King at the opening of the last parliamentary fall session, and the royal speech of 6 November 1991 in which His Majesty the King indicated that this year would be the year of elections. This commitment, he added, serves the country's interest.

Continuing his speech, Mr. Boucetta drew attention to the fact that elections must be preceded by a final settlement of questions which the party considers as fundamental, first of all the revision of the Constitution. Morocco, he said in this connection, cannot operate on the basis of institutions such as those we now have. He therefore recalled the memorandum presented by the PI, the USFP, and the OADP, which boils down to the establishment of accountable institutions from which would issue an equally accountable government. This

memorandum, he said, also raised other questions concerning human rights, public liberties, and how to organize the elections, which should be preceded by other legal and procedural measures.

Therefore, he indicated, the three parties have introduced bills concerning the revision of the electoral rolls, the organization of election campaigns, and sanctions in electoral matters. In the next few days, Maitre Boucetta announced, another bill on collective elections will be introduced.

It was requested that the fall session remain open to discuss these bills.

After mentioning that it was important and necessary to organize these elections in due time, Maitre Boucetta indicated that action is necessary in this respect.

This, he said, will require more definite action within the party.

Before going on to Arab issues, Maitre Boucetta paid homage to the efforts of the Istiqlal Youth Organization, whose Executive Bureau members just visited the unity camps in El Aaiun, Dakhla, and Bojador.

In closing, the Party general secretary paid homage to the resistant Palestinian people, to its leadership and to the intifada, at the same time denouncing Israel's stubbornness; on behalf of the Party, he also denounced the embargo imposed on the Iraqi people, affirming the solidarity of all Istiqlal militants with the Iraqi people, and denouncing threats against Libya.

Maitre Boucetta also hailed the genuine start of the democratic process in Algeria, affirming that our relations with the Algerian people, in the context of this civilized choice, will be for the edification of an Arab Maghreb without borders.

During the afternoon of that same day, the people of El Aaiun gathered on the Dchira Square to take part in the rally organized by the PI, the USFP, and the OADP in commemoration of the 48th anniversary of the presentation of the Independence Manifesto.

More on this later.

Human Rights Appeal for Men 'Held' at Lahmada

92AF0285D Rabat L'OPINION in French
11 Jan 92 p 3

[Article by Abdelkarim Ghallab: "Human Rights in Lahmada"—first paragraph is L'OPINION introduction; quotation marks as published]

[Text] In his column "With the People," in the Monday issue of AL ALAM, our colleague, brother Abdelkarim Ghallab, wrote:

Human Rights in Lahmada

This is the appeal that should be launched by human rights organizations in Morocco, Algeria, and all other UMA [Arab Maghreb Union] countries.

It is an appeal that should reach Amnesty International and other human rights associations throughout the world, an appeal that should reach Mrs. Mitterrand and all persons of integrity in France, in Spain, and in the United States, an appeal that should reach the UN general secretary.

The Lahmada region (in case you don't know) is in the province of Tindouf, under Algerian authority. Algeria has given it, or else leased it, or perhaps abandoned it to the "Polisario" [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro] group. God alone knows the truth on the actual legal status of this region. From this area, gangs of mercenaries used to attack Morocco, directing their aggression against man and the soil and disrupting law and order. It is in this area that secessionist mercenaries are now detaining a few tens of thousands of Sahraoui Moroccans and mistreat them in a manner inconsistent with human rights.

It ranges from brainwashing to the methods of Stalin's and Trotsky's henchmen. The very young, hardly past childhood, are mobilized in the army and sent to certain death on suicide missions. Those who dare raise their head or think, or again shake their fists are ruthlessly interned. Those who demand their rights, those who listen to other radios, those who read books or newspapers not given to them officially, those who try to travel outside organized tours, those who go beyond the perimeters allocated to them are sentenced to hunger, torture, and death.

Thousands of internees are incarcerated in jails. The regimen of the Lahmada internment centers is inspired by Stalinist methods. The "Polisario" has learned its lesson through Castro, the Cuban, and it applies it in Lahmada.

Hundreds of prisoners are running from Cuban jails; they are now using airplanes to do so; they go to Miami, Florida, where they are free again.

Similarly, dozens of men and women flee Lahmada and become free again on Moroccan soil. Today, a wall is being built to surround the internment camps and prevent the internees from walking away.

A Moroccan journalist happens to be imprisoned and tortured in this central jail. He is Mohamed Bahi. Algeria delivered him to the "Polisario."

Press organizations throughout the world must speak up to free the men who are in the Lahmada prisons, with Mohamed Bahi among them.

O, Human Rights, awake!

Respect for Will of Algerian People Urged

92AF0291B Rabat *L'OPINION* in French 7 Jan 92, p 1

[Editorial by Mohamed Idrissi Kaitouni: "Respect the Will of the Algerian People"]

[Text] The campaign for the second round of balloting in the legislative elections is in full swing in Algeria following the landslide vote in favor of the Islamic Salvation Front, which won 188 seats in the first round.

Without interfering in the internal affairs of our Algerian neighbors and brothers and without involving ourselves in detailed analyses of what is happening in Algeria, which has chosen democracy and the free expression of the will of the citizens through honest elections, we can say that the Algerian people have expressed their disapproval and condemnation of the policy pursued by the Boumediene regime and its disastrous consequences at every level.

That policy has not only ruined the Algerian economy and squandered the people's money on activity aimed at bragging and deception but has also smothered any voice that might have been raised against such a policy or called for national dialogue.

The people therefore needed a change in order to put an end to the era of dictatorship and of unrepresentative institutions whose members are elected by majorities of 99.99 percent.

The Algerian people no longer want their attention to be diverted from their basic problems by marginal issues and artificial tensions such as the so-called Saharan affair, which was created by the Boumediene regime in order to fulfill its expansionist dreams and quench its desire for hegemony over its neighbors.

The Algerian people know full well that what is at stake is an unjustified cause and an obstacle placed intentionally on the path leading to the construction of the Maghreb in order to prevent the latter from achieving the complementarity, integration, and unification of its ranks.

When, therefore, they punish with their votes the policy that is at the root of the economic and social crisis with which they are currently struggling, they are simultaneously condemning all the manifestations of that policy, in particular the prefabricated tension that was caused over the right of the Moroccan people to recover their Saharan provinces.

For the Algerian people, keeping this matter alive constitutes a waste of time and energy and a means of diverting the Maghreb's masses from the real problems that are worrying them and handicapping their development and emancipation.

The Algerian people want to put an end to all the aftereffects of the policy of the Boumediene era, including the Saharan matter, which no longer has any

grounds for existence, all the more since the referendum constitutes an honorable solution for the Algerian Government, which must adapt to the requirements of the new era: the era of the verdict of the ballot box and democracy.

The Algerian Government must evolve and review its concept of its country's relations with its neighbors and break with the prejudices and stereotyped ideas inherited from the era of the single party, monopoly, and dictatorship.

The Algerian people want to live in peace with their neighbors. They have no expansionist designs and do not want to annex their neighbors' territories on the false pretext of "self-determination" for a people that exists only in the minds of those who invented it. That is the will of the Algerian people, and it must be respected.

Significance of Independence Celebration Noted

92AF0285A Rabat L'OPINION in French
11 Jan 92 pp 1, 3

[Editorial by Mohamed Idrissi Kaitouni: "Mobilized To Defend Our Territorial Integrity"]

[Text] The Moroccan people are commemorating today the 48th anniversary of the Istiqlal Party's presentation of the Independence Manifesto of 11 January 1944.

As is known, this historical document demanded recognition of Morocco's independence together with respect for its territorial integrity and the establishment of democracy with elected institutions aiming to achieve social justice.

The celebration of this historical event this year takes on a special meaning in that it coincides with the meeting of the Istiqlal Party Central Committee in El Aaiun and with a large popular rally held in that town by the Istiqlal Party, the USFP [Socialist Union of Popular Forces] and the OADP [Organization of Democratic and Popular Action].

By commemorating the 11th of January in Moroccan Sahara, the Istiqlal Party wishes to emphasize the connection between independence, democracy, and territorial integrity.

In fact, actual and complete independence is inconceivable without democracy and the reunification of the national soil that was dismembered by colonial powers.

The choice of El Aaiun for the meeting of the Party Central Committee and for the rally commemorating the 11th of January reflects the Moroccan people's resolute will to defend its territorial unity, preserve the Moroccan character of its recovered Sahara, and remain mobilized behind His Majesty the King to foil any machination undertaken against the integrity of our national soil and our sovereignty.

The 11th of January takes on special significance in Morocco's History, for it materializes the fact that the Moroccan people were asking for more than mere economic, administrative, and social reforms and were demanding independence for the country.

The Manifesto also assumed historical importance because it was developed in perfect coordination between His Majesty the late Mohammed V and the National Movement, and was the expression of perfect symbiosis between the King and the People and their commitment to the same struggle.

The Manifesto of 11 January 1944, which requested His Majesty the late Mohammed V (...) to institute a democratic regime comparable to the regimes adopted by Muslim countries in the East—guaranteeing the rights of all components and classes of Moroccan society, and defining the duties of each one—established a close connection between independence, territorial integrity, and political, economic, and social democracy.

Today, 48 years after the presentation of the Manifesto of 11 January 1944, and 29 years after the presentation of the Manifesto of Economic and Social Egalitarianism on 11 January 1963, Morocco has made progress toward consolidating national independence and achieving territorial reunification, and it pursues its efforts to achieve the objectives set in the Manifestos of 1944 and 1963.

Besides, these two manifestos are complementary, as independence can only be total and should involve all fields, political as well as economic, social and cultural.

There can be no effective independence without full sovereignty over all of the national territory.

Therefore, from the start, the Istiqlal Party, in its historical Manifesto of 1944, linked independence to the achievement of territorial integrity through the return of all occupied territories to the Motherland.

In fact, our national soil was dismembered by various powers and it was quite natural that one of the essential and foremost demands of the Istiqlal Party and the Moroccan People should be the liberation of the occupied territories and the achievement of territorial reunification.

Simultaneously with this fight to preserve national assets and achieve territorial reunification, the Moroccan People are striving to give Democracy a concrete content and to build our representative system on strong and sound bases.

Democracy is the framework required to enable the People to enjoy their political, economic, and social rights with respect to education, employment, health care, housing, security, culture, and the various social benefits.

Democracy is a must if we are to achieve equitable distribution of wealth and an improved balance within society, to prevent discrepancies between the various social layers and regions.

Democracy is vital to enable the People to implement a dynamic program that will meet their expectations, solve their problems, give priority to youth, and prepare the country to successfully cross the threshold of the 21st century.

The independence for which the People fought and for which our martyrs died cannot be imperfect, nor can it depart from the objectives outlined at the time of the national liberation struggle.

It is a total independence, which establishes the People's rights and provides for progress and prosperity in the context of Democracy, Islam, the Constitutional Monarchy, and territorial integrity.

It is therefore essential to mobilize all material and human potentialities to build a strong Morocco, emancipated and developed, guaranteeing the political, economic, and social rights of all citizens.

Boucetta on Anniversary of Independence Manifesto

92AF0289A Rabat L'OPINION in French
13 Jan 92 pp 1, 4

["Excerpts" from speech by M'hamed Boucetta, secretary general of the Istiqlal Party, at a political rally held in El-Aaiun on 11 January 1992 to commemorate the 48th anniversary of the Independence Manifesto: "Saharan Provinces Will Never Be Separated From the Rest of Morocco"; first seven paragraphs are L'OPI-NION introduction]

[Excerpts] The inhabitants of El-Aaiun experienced a historic day on Saturday 11 January, the day commemorating the 48th anniversary of the presentation of the Independence Manifesto. The event was marked by an important political rally sponsored by the Istiqlal Party, the USFP [Socialist Union of Popular Forces], and the OADP [Organization of Democratic and Popular Action] as part of the national mobilization to win the gamble of unification.

Dehira Square, the site of the rally—Dehira being the name of a famous and heroic battle fought by Moroccan fighters against the Spanish colonizer—was the venue on that day for a large crowd that had come to salute and share sentiments of nationalism and of attachment to Morocco's territorial integrity with the leaders and representatives of the three national parties, who had decided to hold the event in the city of El-Aaiun precisely, and in the present circumstances, in order to confirm the close link between the past struggle to regain freedom and dignity and the present struggle aimed at preserving the Moroccan people's gains and defending the unity of Morocco in its territorial entirety.

The delegations from the three parties—headed by M'hamed Boucetta, secretary general of the Istiqlal Party; Mohamed Bensaid, secretary general of the OADP; and Kamal, member of the Central Committee of the USFP—were given an imposing welcome by an enthusiastic population determined to defend the Moroccan character of the Sahara and to make any sacrifice to cut short separatism and division.

The rally started at around 1600 hours following an equally significant tour by M'hamed Boucetta and Mohamed Bensaid, accompanied by the members of the Executive Committee and Central Committee of the Istiqlal Party and the members of the OADP delegation, to the unity camps, which shelter Moroccan families of Saharan origin who were driven out by colonialism and who are now demanding their legitimate right to participate in the referendum.

That tour enabled the delegation to inquire about the spirit of mobilization inspiring those inhabitants and about the satisfactory conditions of their stay in the unity camps.

Following the reading of a few verses from the Koran, the rally was marked by speeches by M'hamed Boucetta, Mohamed Bensaid, and the representative of the USFP (whose top officials had been detained in Rabat by the death of Bouabid). They emphasized the great significance of the holding of such an event in El-Aaiun and presented a general outline of the struggle engaged in by the entire Moroccan people from Tangiers to Lagouira to regain freedom and dignity, stressing the historical, political, and cultural evidence and the evidence provided by the struggle that the Saharan provinces belong to the mother country, Morocco.

Then, addressing an enthusiastic audience completely mobilized for the defense of our national cause, the secretary general of the Istiqlal Party, M'hamed Boucetta, delivered a very important speech, excerpts from which we are publishing below. [passage omitted]

Referendum Can Only Be Confirmation

Also by our presence among you today, we wish to say to those close to us and also to those in MINURSO [UN Mission for the Organization of a Referendum in Western Sahara] that these territories are Moroccan and that they will remain so. To say to them that if Morocco, in the person of its king, has made a commitment in a civilized manner in response to the request formulated by a certain number of friendly countries and others to hold a referendum—we say to those people that this referendum will serve only to confirm that Sahara is Moroccan.

Our brothers here must realize that the current situation is a tricky one and requires increased awareness so that every maneuver will be thwarted.

Those who are in Lahmada, whether they have gone astray or been led into error, must realize that history

does not forgive and that only the right path—that of uprightness—pays off. Man may be mistaken, but the essential thing is that he stop himself in time. [passage omitted]

Free Those Being Held Against Their Will

This at a time when we know that the overwhelming majority of those in Lahmada are being held there against their will! It is as though they were in prison. We also know that the leaders of the separatist movement are lying to them and promising them things that they will never get.

They are not telling them the truth.

For our part, we refuse to let those people remain in the situation in which they find themselves. The United Nations and the international humanitarian organizations must help the the people being held hostage in Tindouf and Lahmada and enable them to return home. That is the true path. It is necessary to put an end to all that trickery, which no longer deceives anyone.

That is why we came to El-Aaiun. We came here so that the people in Lahmada will hear us up close. We came to tell them that they can no longer count on military or other aid from Algeria because that country is wrestling with its own problems. Just as the other African countries which were formerly bought and bribed by Boumediene's Algeria will no longer do them any good.

Those who have gone astray must therefore come home and rally to their country, which is Morocco and which belongs to the Moroccans and to no one else.

All Saharans Must Vote

On this occasion, we say to our Saharan brothers who came from northern Morocco that they are here in their native land to perform a sacred duty. It is their duty, and thank God, they are performing it in the best way because they know that this is a field of honor. We salute them for their determination and patriotism. Their presence here is, however, in keeping with the spirit of the UN plan, which says that every person belonging to these regions is entitled to express his or her will and to participate in the referendum. All the United Nations has to do, therefore, is let them express their will and avoid making a partial selection. We refuse to allow natives of these regions, who number in the tens of thousands, to be deprived of that legitimate right. By depriving them of it, the United Nations is violating its own documents. We say that all Saharans without exception must participate in the referendum. The United Nations must not violate the plan that it established. The United Nations requested that there be what is called a cease-fire, and that cease-fire took effect on 6 September 1991.

End Infiltrations

Everyone knows, however, that no member of the separatists supported by Algeria was previously able to set foot on the soil of this region. But since the cease-fire took effect, they have begun infiltrating, using the United Nations as a cover.

The United Nations is responsible for those infiltrations, which incidentally are not accepted by the Moroccans. As we salute the sacrifices made by the Royal Armed Forces, which built the defensive wall and have guaranteed security and tranquility in these regions under the command of their supreme commander, His Majesty King Hassan II, we call upon them to put an end to those infiltrations, the purpose of which is to send terrorist gangs into our territory—something we will never accept.

Morocco has already taken its stand, and this entire episode must come to an end. Because we have other fish to fry. We have children to educate, we have sick people to treat, we have unemployed people for whom we must find jobs, and we have institutions in which positions must be filled by sound and impartial elections so that those institutions will be truly democratic. Whether there is a referendum or not, those currently in our territories must return home.

If we are here today, the reason is that we are among our brothers and families and that the anniversary of 11 January 1944 concerns all of Morocco.

We are here to build the future and to build the Arab Greater Maghreb, which is the destiny of our children. Those who have gone astray will always find open arms to welcome them. We hope to see them return to the right path, but at the same time, we will not permit the sons of our people to remain illegally confined. We must react in order to deliver all those inhabitants.

What About Human Rights?

The mercenaries are holding against his will a Moroccan journalist who went to Algeria. So where are the human rights associations that espouse the cause of Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro]—why are they doing nothing to free the people that Polisario is either holding illegally or has kidnapped?

Let Us Build Our Country Together

We want to build the future of our country. Therefore, in the name of all our brothers, I say to those who are in the unity camps that they have come to do their duty, and I say to those in Lahmada that we will not let them fall and

that we will do everything possible to see that the siege is raised. We say to those who have gone astray that they have only one choice: to return to their country. At the same time, we salute our brothers who have returned to the mother country and say to them that they have come back to participate in the building of their country. We also pay tribute to the bravery shown just this week by many Saharan women who managed to escape with their

children and took the road to Figuig in order to return to their country. Others will also come.

I also want to say that the perseverance displayed by the tribes and residents of these regions constitutes a glorious page in the history of Morocco. We therefore salute you once again and say to you that victory is very near.

INDIA

Policymakers Alerted to Russian-Pakistani Friendship

92AS0419A Madras *DINAMANI* in Tamil
24 Dec 91 p 6

[Editorial: "Closeness in Russian-Pakistani Relations"]

[Text] From the days of Krushchev, until recent times, the Soviet Union was the only country that remained a very close ally of India. Now that Soviet Union has broken up into several independent nations and the events that are occurring against the interests of India has been of great concern to all Indians.

Two days ago Alexander Rudzkoy, the vice president of the Russian Republic, one of the largest and most powerful among those independent nations visited Pakistan and conducted talks with their leader Ishaq Khan. The joint communique released at the end of this meeting confirmed the resolutions taken to strengthen the relationship between these two countries.

Most important, the Russian Republic has gravitated towards Pakistan, unlike the Soviet Union that supported India in the dispute concerning Kashmir. India has been categorically maintaining its stand that Kashmir is an integral part of the Indian union. Whereas Pakistan claims that the region of Kashmir is under dispute and that Kashmir people should be given the opportunity to determine their future. Also, India has to implement the resolutions issued by the United Nations regarding this. From the beginning, the United States of America has been supporting the Pakistan position [as published]. It is unfortunate that the Republic of Russia, which will be replacing the former Soviet Union in the UN Security Council, is also acting in support of the unreasonable demands of Pakistan.

The sudden support given to Pakistan by President Yeltsin of Russia is a great defeat to Indian diplomacy. Recently, when Pakistan introduced a resolution in the United Nations to declare South Asia a nuclear-free zone, the Soviet Union joined with America in supporting Pakistan. It is notable that at that time Gorbachev's government was in trouble and shaken up. India has voted against the resolution because it permits the super powers to retain their nuclear weapons.

The reason for the Russian Republic to support Pakistan is that it readily recognized Russia without any delay. Greatly pleased by this gesture, Yeltsin sent a letter indicating his readiness to have an alliance and friendship treaty. Under these circumstances, one wonders what will happen to the earlier agreement between the former Soviet Union and India.

News reports say that Russia might sell military equipment and weapons to Pakistan. Also it will show concern for Pakistan's security matters. The disappearance of the

Soviet Union, which helped India when it was threatened by the United States Navy during the Bangladesh war, and the emergence of Russia under the leadership of Yeltsin who supports Pakistan, doesn't seem to be a good omen.

Narasimha Rao's government has to take immediate diplomatic action to change the notion among the nations of the world that India does not have many friends. India has to send high-level diplomatic missions to Russia and other independent Soviet republics to win back the old friendship. Action should be taken to get China's friendship. By supporting the pro-Israel resolution of the United Nations, we have gained the dissatisfaction of the Arab countries. We expect that Narasimha Rao's government will take the necessary steps to rectify that mistake.

Papers Report 14th Congress of CPI-M**Opening on 3 Jan**

92AS0515A Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 4 Jan 92 p 11

[Article: "Expose IMF-Dictated Policy: CPM"]

[Text] Madras, Jan 3—The 14th CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist] Congress opened here today with a call to the party cadres to expose the IMF-World Bank dictated policy adopted by the Congress government and mobilise the democratic and secularist forces to deny the BJP Bharatiya Janata Party] its ultimate victory.

The CPM perception is that in the prevailing political situation the Narasimha Rao regime may not last long and the country may well have to face a fresh election. And the BJP, which has emerged as a real force seeking to capture power, is out to divert growing discontent against the Congress rule into divisive channels.

What needs to be done is to unleash a mass movement to bring about a change in the co-relation of class forces. A draft political resolution to be adopted at the CPM congress pointed out that the BJP's economic platform was the same as that of the Congress—pro-big business and pro-landlord. Stressing the need for the CPM and other Left and democratic forces to direct public discontent into democratic channels, the resolution said the link between mass-resistance to the anti-people policies of the Congress government and isolation of the BJP and communal forces must be clearly understood.

In his introductory speech on the political resolution, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet, who is expected to take over as the CPM general secretary, said the BJP was out to prevent mobilisation of democratic forces and consolidation of the leftist movement. There were indications of fundamentalist forces gaining ground in other states (besides Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab).

"Our objective is to strengthen the left-democratic unity," said Mr. Surjeet, adding that one could expect a

fresh combination of political parties to emerge. The CPM leader stressed the need for the party to take advantage of the anticipated changes. Alliances are not permanent said Mr. Surjeet, and in allying with other parties we have to demarcate where such demarcation is necessary.

Mr. Surjeet, referring to past experience, observed that the CPM had not always asserted itself as the party representing the working class. Besides, in a charged atmosphere (following the acceptance of the Mandal commission report by the V.P. Singh government) it was not always possible for the party to project its stand effectively.

The CPM had extended support on the Mandal issue, provided the V.P. Singh government included the economic criterion. This was not acceptable to the previous National Front government. Another aspect of the Mandal report was that it did not take into account the factors such as poverty alienation and unemployment. The Mandal commission favoured implementation of land reforms in this context. This aspect of the Mandal report remained ignored by various parties, said Mr. Surjeet.

He expressed surprise that the eighth plan document made no reference to land reforms, while the earlier documents used to make a token mention of the issue. Citing the latest census report, the CPM leader pointed out that the number of cultivators had declined and there was an appreciable increase in the agriculture workers in the states where capitalist investment in agriculture had taken place. The census figure pointed to a transfer of land from poorer sections to rich land owners, said Mr. Surjeet.

Accusing the Centre of having ignored the social factor in its liberalisation policy, the CPM leader said the Narasimha Rao government had opened the floodgate for international agencies and allowed U.S. imperialism to dictate terms. The World Bank has captured the Central secretariat, said Mr. Surjeet, adding that the Centre, in submitting to the IMF conditions, demobilised the entire structure which had facilitated the country's industrial growth.

Earlier, in his inaugural address, the party general secretary, Mr. E.M.S. Namboodiripad, said the reverses suffered by socialism in eastern Europe and the dismantling of the Soviet Union marked the end of the bi-polar world and the beginning of a unipolar world dominated by U.S. imperialism. Mr. Namboodiripad expressed confidence that the reactionary offensive of U.S. imperialism would be countered by the progressive forces. China, Vietnam, Cuba and Korea (which have sent fraternal delegates to the CPM congress) have declared their resolve to uphold the socialist path. Among the fraternal parties in other countries resistance is growing to the capitulationist policies of the erstwhile leadership of the Soviet Union, headed by Mr. Gorbachov, said the CPM general secretary.

Surjeet on 4 Jan Session

92AS0515B Bombay THE SUNDAY TIMES OF INDIA
in English 5 Jan 92 p 26

[Article: "CPM Mum Over Move on Punjab Poll"]

[Text] Madras, January 4. There was no clear-cut response from the CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist] leadership to the move for fielding common candidates in the forthcoming Punjab poll. The Prime Minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, is reported to have said the issue would be considered, if such a proposal came from other political parties.

Asked about his party's reaction, the CPM leader, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet, told newsmen that the Prime Minister was talking about electoral combinations, instead of doing something to evolve a political solution to the Punjab tangle. "What combination is he talking about," asked Mr. Surjeet, adding that in fact, efforts are being made to persuade the Akalis to boycott the poll.

Mr. Surjeet, briefing the press on the deliberations of the CPM congress, expressed the view that extremists in Punjab could not be isolated, if elections were held without the participation of the Akalis. The Akali factions could take the position that there was no point in holding elections, if the Centre did not come up with a package of measures to facilitate a political solution.

The CPM, at the recent National Integration Council [NIC] meeting in New Delhi, stressed the need for the Centre to initiate steps for a political solution. Mr. Surjeet, who represented the party at the NIC meeting, reiterated that the CPM would not accept any NIC resolution that ignored the CPM proposal. The party leader said his information was that the bureaucracy at the Centre held the view that any political initiative in Punjab should be talked about only after the elections. This is wrong, said Mr. Surjeet.

Asked with whom the Centre should hold talks and on what basis, Mr. Surjeet retorted that the issue had been debated for the last one decade. The Rajiv-Longowal accord should be the basis for a political solution, according to the CPM leader.

The Prime Minister, who talked of fielding common candidates in Punjab, had not uttered a word about the steps his government proposed to take to facilitate a political solution, said Mr. Surjeet. The CPM insistence on the Narasimha Rao government clarifying its position, here and now did not mean that the CPM was looking for a reason to stay away from the forthcoming Punjab poll. "We will participate in the election," he said.

Referring to the deliberations of the 14th CPM congress, on the second day today, Mr. Surjeet said the main thrust of the political resolution had the support of the delegates from 15 states who spoke today. The discussions would continue tomorrow, when the political resolution would be finalised.

Over 2,430 amendments were received by the CPM central committee, which had circulated the 44-page draft resolution among the state units two months ago to elicit their views. Of these, 67 amendments were accepted, said Mr. Surjeet, adding that the amendments pertained to elaboration of the party stand on various issues, omissions, and the perception of various state party units on the prevailing situation in the country.

Meanwhile, in a significant shift in its policy, the CPM today effected an important amendment to its draft political resolution regarding the possibility of holding a 'snap poll' to the Lok Sabha in the near future, PTI adds.

Mr. Surjeet told a press conference here that the CPM central committee had accepted a suggestion by most of the delegates at the congress, that a line in the draft political resolution which reads, "the people, after two quick successive elections, were not prepared to face yet another election" be deleted.

Though Mr. Surjeet evaded questions on whether the deletion meant a change in the CPM's stand regarding the stability of the Congress government at the Centre, he said the draft resolution was circulated to the party units at the village level two months ago and a lot of policy changes had been announced by the Narasimha Rao government in this period at the instance of international agencies, including the IMF.

He said the government's stability did not depend on the number of MPs [members of Parliament] the ruling party had, but on its ability to solve problems.

Mr. Surjeet said the central committee had decided not to accept some amendments to the party's stand on the recent developments in the erstwhile Soviet Union and eastern Europe.

Some delegates felt that distortions and deviations in the CPSU began only after its 20th congress, which elected Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev as the party general secretary, he said, adding that the central committee was of the view that there was nothing wrong in the basic principle of Marxism-Leninism but in the accumulated distortions in applying them.

The committee also rejected the amendments moved by some delegates that the party leadership had underestimated the BJP's [Bharatiya Janata Party] strength, he said, adding the leadership had, right from the beginning, been cautioning the Janata Dal about the danger of communalism spread by the BJP. But the Dal had, to ensure a one-to-one contest during the 1989 Lok Sabha poll, entered into an alliance with the BJP, he said.

The alliance with the Dal and the discontent among the people against the then Rajiv Gandhi government enabled the BJP to improve its strength in the Lok Sabha from a mere two to 83, he said.

Report on 5 Jan Session

92AS0515C Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 6 Jan 92 p 1

[Article: "CPM To Oppose Economic Policy"]

[Text] Madras, Jan 5. The CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist] congress today adopted a resolution, after two days of intensive debate, that centred on the perils of the economic policy, adopted by the Centre, the disturbing prospects of the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] emerging as the alternative to the Congress and the attitude the CPM should adopt, towards the Narasimha Rao government.

(The CPM today declared that it would vote against the Narasimha Rao government on the "disastrous course of mortgaging the nation's economy to the IMF" and the party could not be held responsible if the government fell on that score, reports PTI.)

Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet said he did not exclude the possibility of a mid-term Lok Sabha poll.

The amendments brought up for discussion, strengthened the CPM resolve, to fight back the Centre's economic policy within and outside Parliament, said the party spokesman, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet. Another resolution regarding the economic onslaught on the people would be adopted, giving a call for a country wide struggle.

Mr. Surjeet claimed that the unanimous adoption of the political resolution, incorporating 47 amendments, indicated that the CPM stood united in the face of a crisis in the international communist movement, and the complicated political situation in the country.

The political resolution, strident in its attack on the Narasimha Rao government, stops short of calling for its ouster. "We have not said that we want to bring down this government," said Mr. Surjit, adding that he could not help if the government fell as a result of its policy. What happens to the government is not my concern, said the CPM leader.

In response to a question Mr. Surjeet said the possibility of a mid-term poll could not be excluded. Would not be the BJP be the gainer? Mr. Surjeet reckoned that the BJP's communalist thrust would not work in a situation of growing economic hardship.

The CPM leader reiterated his party resolve to carry out a two-pronged movement to resist the Congress economic measures, and defeat the BJP efforts to divert public discontent into divisive channels.

However, the question that remained unanswered was: what happens, if the CPM drive against the Congress helped the BJP? What, if the CPM stance drove the Congress closer to the BJP? We don't want to talk about follow-up action," said Mr. Surjeet, adding that his party was aware of the complexity of the situation.

Ideological Document Discussed 7 Jan

92AS0515D Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 8 Jan 92 p 15

[Article: "Gorbachev Jettisoned Marxism: CPM Rebuke"]

[Text] Madras, Jan 7. The 14th CPM [Communist Party of India-Marxist] Congress, in session for the fourth day yesterday has taken up for discussion the party's resolution on ideological issues. The stress was on adherence to the Marxism-Leninist principles. A 35-page draft document prepared by the CPM central committee attracted over 1400 amendments, of which 42 were accepted, said the CPM politburo member and party spokesman, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet. The discussions continue and the ideological resolution is to be adopted.

Speakers were unanimous in their criticism of the pursuit of socialism by the CPSU under the leadership of Gorbachev. He was accused of having jettisoned the Marxist position. The draft resolution pointed out that the CPM had repeatedly expressed concern at the open abuse of the opportunities offered by glasnost and perestroika. Capitalist prescriptions were being doled out as solutions to socialism's problems.

Striking a note of self-criticism the draft resolution admitted that the CPM in the past had not paid adequate attention to understand the ground realities in the socialist countries. Information received from fraternal parties regarding the internal situation in these countries was accepted with excessive confidence.

Conceding that his party took for granted what was fed by the CPSU and other socialist countries, Mr. Surjeet said: "We were not aware of what was happening. Nor did we make much efforts to find out. The CPM leader held that such an attitude should be viewed in the background of the past achievements of the socialist movement. Now we will be more vigilant," said Mr. Surjeet.

Many of the delegates from 22 states who spoke during yesterday's debate referred to the failure of the CPM leadership to make a timely and proper assessment of the Soviet developments. They want further explanation, said Mr. Surjeet, adding that the distortions in implementing socialism by the erstwhile Soviet Union needed to be studied in depth.

The ideological document said the global situation in the wake of collapse of the Communist-led regimes in eastern Europe and the dismantling of the Soviet Union could be understood only through a proper study of the four fundamental contradictions (1) between the forces of world socialism and imperialism (2) between imperialism and the developing world (3) contradictions within the group of imperialist countries and (4) between capital and labour in the capitalist countries.

The potential of world capitalism, in terms of its capacity to develop further the productive forces and to

adopt itself to the changed circumstances, should not be underestimated. Having said that Mr. Surjeet reiterated the inevitability of the transformation from capitalism to socialism. When that would happen is quite another matter, said Mr. Surjeet.

On the international communist movement, the CPM document observed that the CPSU in its 27th Congress in 1985 highlighted the intensification of the four fundamental contradictions, asserting that the co-relation of class forces was in favour of peace, progress and socialism. However, two years later this understanding was given up and the theory of modification of contradictions advanced. The CPSU negated any confrontation with imperialism and sought to create a safe and civilised world order in co-operation with imperialist forces.

Capitalist reforms were introduced, advocating the creation of a full-fledged market economy. The role of central planning was undermined. The upshot of it, as the CPM draft resolution put it, was that the Soviet Union, despite a bumper harvest, had to seek food aid from elsewhere. Virtual anarchy prevailed, blackmarketeers flourished. The party's role in the Soviet Union got undermined.

Instead of deepening socialist democracy in the Soviet Union, national chauvinism was allowed to take root. Public discontent was exploited by anti-socialist forces to fan chauvinism. That led to bloody riots. The CPM document noted that although the party had, from time to time, voiced its disagreement with the Soviet developments in recent years the CPM could not assess the extent of damage the Soviet distortions had done to the cause of socialism.

Mr. Surjeet said the debate on ideological issues had strengthened the CPM's faith in the validity of the principle of the dictatorship of the proletariat, as opposed to the dictatorship of the bourgeois. "We stand by the principle because it explains the class nature of the state," said Mr. Surjeet. He pointed out that the form of the dictatorship of the proletariat varied in different socialist countries, in keeping with their socio-economic conditions and historical background.

Referring to India, the CPM leader pointed to the need to replace the present bourgeois-landlord class rule with a people's democracy led by the working class. The class alliance of the people's democratic front, as perceived by the CPM, would not merely consist of the working class and peasants but would also include the rich peasant, the urban middle class and also sections of, what the CPM termed the national bourgeoisie. Mr. Surjeet reckoned that non-Congress bourgeoisie could be allies in the people's democratic front. He considered the Congress the big bourgeois party that had its ally in the landlord.

Interview With Surjeet Singh

92AS0515E Madras *THE HINDU* in English
6 Jan 92 p 8

[Article: "We'll Emerge Stronger: Surjeet"; italicized, boldface words as published]

[Text] *There could not have been a more crucial juncture for any communist party to hold its congress at a time when much of the Establishment Socialism lies in tatters. Some of the uncharitable comments that the 14th CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist] congress, currently on in Madras, has evoked from the party's detractors is therefore understandable; as also the anxieties and fears of the comrades themselves. The senior politburo member, Mr. Harkishan Singh Surjeet would, however, have us believe that the fears are more apparent than real, if not a creation of anti-communist propaganda, and that the party is confident of weathering the storm.*

"We are going to emerge stronger from this congress," says Mr. Surjeet as he waits in the wings to take over as the party's general secretary from Mr. E.M.S. Namboodiripad later this week.

In an interview to Hasan Suroor here, he talks about the party's future programme, especially its attitude to the minority Congress(I) Government at the Centre, its understanding of the domestic scene and the ideological crisis that has raised some uneasy questions about the future of socialism.

Excerpts from the interview:

Question: In your introductory remarks at the congress the other day, you talked about seeking the support of "secular bourgeois" parties to seize the initiative from the Congress(I) and the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and in this context you spoke of "new combinations" that might emerge. Which are these secular bourgeois parties and combinations?

Mr. Surjeet: You see, what I said was that the Left alone is not strong enough to seize the initiative from the BJP which has skilfully tried to divert the people's discontent with the Government's policies into divisive channels. In such a situation the Left should not hesitate to join hands with secular bourgeois parties so that it can make a more effective political intervention.

But which are these parties, and "new combinations" you mentioned?

I am coming to that. About new combinations, you see how many times the Congress has split since 1967? So many people left, formed new groups and mobilised others around them. When the Jan Morcha was formed who could predict the shape it finally took and how we were able to mobilise people on a broad platform in 1989. Now I don't believe the Congress is stable. It is not a question of numbers. Even if it manages a majority, its policies will remain a source of instability. The people's

discontent will have echo within the party and you cannot say what will then happen.

You foresee a split in the Congress(I)?

We will see, I am talking about stability.

You have still not identified the secular bourgeois parties?

What is there to identify. There is Telugu Desam in Andhra Pradesh, DMK [Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam] in Tamil Nadu and the Janata Dal [JD], whatever be its future, has a base in Bihar. You cannot ignore these parties. But as I said at the congress also while allying with them to achieve our ends we should not forget our responsibility to the working class or compromise on basic principles. Let's remember there can be no permanent alliances with bourgeois parties.

When you talk of Left unity, do you include groups like the Indian People's Front [IPF]?

We have said earlier also that if IPF gives up its anti-communism we have no problem. We have always called for a positive attitude to those groups which are willing to join the Left mainstream.

Would the stress on Left unity bring you closer to the CPI [Communist Party of India], or do you think that its perception of the ideological crisis which is so much in conflict with yours would create a distance?

I don't think the CPI rank and file will accept the official line but that is their business. On the domestic front, we have been cooperating with each other quite well and that process will go on. There is no difficulty.

You seem to be greatly disillusioned with the Janata Dal and have actually blamed it for the rise of the BJP? What are its implications for the Left-JD alliance?

Not exactly disillusioned. But it is true that their poor performance led to the dramatic increase in the BJP's strength. We were always opposed to any understanding or arrangement with the BJP and in 1989 elections wanted to isolate both the BJP and the Congress(I). But the Janata Dal insisted on one-to-one fight against the Congress(I); the all-in Opposition idea as we had predicted did not work and led to a break with the BJP and the collapse of the National Front Government. But let me say this—that the Janata Dal did put up a fight against communal forces and some anti-democratic tendencies. We were not happy with its economic policies and we told them that.

There is a view that your party's credibility has suffered because of your alliance with the Janata Dal. Do you agree?

No, because we never compromised on our basic principles. Even while supporting the National Front Government we always clearly demarcated our position on policies with which we did not agree. We put our foot down on any compromise with the BJP on the Rath

Yatra issue and it was because of our consistent and emphatic stand that the National Front Government was forced to stop the Yatra. And this will continue to be our policy whenever we enter into an understanding with a bourgeois party. We will project our line independently of others.

There is a feeling among some of your partymen that the party underestimated the potential of the BJP at the last congress, and the point has been raised during the discussion on the draft political resolution. What do you have to say?

We don't agree with this view. If you see our political resolution of the 13th party congress you will know that we repeatedly talked about isolating the BJP as well as the Congress(I). Our campaign in the 1989 elections was that both were equally dangerous but the immediate task we said was to oust the Rajiv Gandhi Government while continuing the fight against communal and divisive forces. We told the Janata Dal also but they did not listen to us.

But has the BJP's growth exceeded your calculations?

You see, it skilfully used the situation. The Janata Dal remained silent to keep itself in power and that is how the BJP grew. Now they (the BJP) are trying to use the unrest over the Government's policies for divisive purposes. As we have said in our political resolution the BJP's growth in the past three years is also the result of the Congress policy of compromise. It failed to defend secularism when it had a chance to do it. When the BJP withdrew support to the V.P. Singh Government we told them (the Congress-I) that they could save it by voting for it in Parliament and defeat the communal forces but they did not listen.

You are extremely unhappy with the Congress(I)'s economic policies but you haven't done anything on the ground yet to show you mean business. What are the party's plans?

We will soon come out with a comprehensive programme of action and you can expect some solid action on the ground. We will launch a mass movement and we are not afraid of elections. In fact we have accepted an amendment to delete from the draft political resolution the sentence which said that "the people after two quick successive elections were not prepared to face yet another election."

Does it mean that you are going to demand mid-term polls?

There is no such thing at the moment. We were never opposed to elections but that sentence gave that impression. So, we have decided to drop it. The immediate task is to build a strong Left, secular democratic platform to meet the communal challenge posed by the BJP and the anti-people policies of the Government.

Now, the party congress has been in session for two days. What is the mood like?

Very encouraging. Not a single State unit has voiced any difference with the central committee's analysis. Though there have been suggestions about emphasis nobody has questioned the main thrust of the draft political resolution. We received 2,345 amendments and 187 suggestions but none points to any basic disagreement. The central committee accepted 67 amendments, nothing very major except the one about elections. Others call for further elaboration of certain formulations or draw attention to something that we may have missed.

Are you happy with the organisational strength of the party?

We have prepared a detailed review of the organisation in the past 13 years since the Salkia plenum in 1978 but I cannot disclose it before it is discussed by the congress. The political influence of the party has increased but its organisation does not match its influence and prestige. The growth has been uneven and we are going to take firm measures to streamline it.

Are you satisfied with your growth in the north?

It has grown but not to our satisfaction. But we have a presence and we are confident that we will improve further.

Any surprises at the congress?

You will see a stronger and more confident party emerging after the congress which will prove to be a milestone.

How "young" will be the new politburo [PB] and the central committee [CC]?

Many State committees have already acquired a lot of young blood. You will see it here (CC and PB) also.

Any dramatic changes?

Not dramatic, but substantive.

Tamil Nadu: Jeyalalitha Meets Narasimha Rao in Delhi

92AS0419B Madras DINAMANI in Tamil
24 Dec 91 p 6

[Editorial: "Chief Minister's Meeting With the Prime Minister"]

[Text] Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jeyalalitha participated in the first day of the two-day conference organized by the National Productivity Council in New Delhi. As announced earlier, she returned to Madras on the second day in a private aircraft to attend the memorial commemorating the late Chief Minister M. G. Ramachandran.

Jeyalalitha's 45-minute meeting with the Prime Minister has become more significant to Tamil Nadu than her participation in the National Productivity Council's seminar.

This meeting helped Tamil Nadu to reiterate its demands regarding the distribution of the waters of the Cauvery River. After this meeting, the Prime Minister canceled the joint meeting with the chief ministers of Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Karnataka, and Kerala as scheduled earlier to address the problem regarding sharing of the waters of Cauvery River.

Attacks on the Tamils in Karnataka State have caused havoc. Even now Tamil's settlements are being targeted. These antisocial activities are conducted by an ethnic federation of Kannada Chaluvaliya's.

Since December 13, there has been an exodus of Tamils to protect themselves against the killings, lootings, and arson in their settlements. Jeyalalitha submitted a petition explaining the status of the affected Tamils to the Prime Minister. It is learned that the petition also mentioned that, even though the people of Tamil Nadu could create a problem similar to the Kannada-speaking people living in Tamil Nadu, still the Tamils are showing forbearance in a very praiseworthy manner. However, she must have included this [retaliation possibility] as a mere warning. It has become important for the Chief Minister to make it clear to the Prime Minister that if this kind of violence continues against the Tamils in Karnataka, it will not be possible for the state to protect the Kannada-speaking people in Tamil Nadu.

Jeyalalitha also requested the Prime Minister to issue an ordinance to the government of Karnataka to protect the lives and property of the Tamils and to guarantee a secure environment in which to live.

Narasimha Rao has replied to her in a positive manner. Tamil Nadu's interests will be protected in the distribution of the waters of the Cauvery River and the affected Tamils in the state of Karnataka will be adequately compensated.

Even though the joint meeting of the chief ministers of the four states has been canceled, Prime Minister Narasimha Rao still hopes to resolve the sharing of the waters of the Cauvery River through proper negotiations. To begin, he has started separate discussions with each of the chief ministers. He understood the fairness and the determination of the government of Tamil Nadu's viewpoint through the preliminary meeting he had with the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.

He also held talks with the Chief Minister of Karnataka. Similarly, he will conduct talks with the chief ministers of Pondicherry and Kerala to determine the plan of action to be taken in this regard. We can anticipate that his decision will be in accordance with the members of the judiciary council and with the view to protect the prosperity of Tamil Nadu's agriculture.

In the conference organized by the National Productivity Council, the Karnataka State Chief Minister Bangarappa has also expressed the same sentiments as the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. He also reiterated that there should be a final and a long-term solution to the dispute regarding the distribution of Cauvery River waters. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jeyalalitha has requested the creation of a water reservoir by joining all the South Indian rivers in order to augment the water supply of Tamil Nadu, which has greatly depleted its ground-water supply, and to irrigate lands that are drying up due to the unavailability of water. Needless to say, by implementing this request, the central government can permanently resolve the disputed issue of sharing the waters of Cauvery. In fact, the actual cause of the problem is that there is not enough water in the river for both the states to share.

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